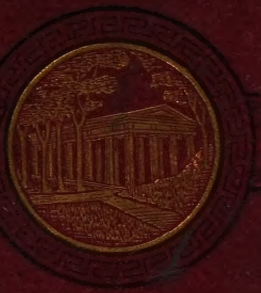

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SELECTED ESSAYS

OF

JOSEPH ADDISON.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

C. T. WINCHESTER,

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY.

BOSTON:
CHAUTAUQUA PRESS,
117 FRANKLIN STREET.
1886.

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INTRODUCTION.

"Born to write, converse, and live with ease."

In this oft-quoted line, Mr. Pope, with his own admirable terseness, has summed up the character of his great contemporary Joseph Addison. For Mr. Addison seems to have had by nature that most excellent gift, an even and cheerful temper. One thinks of him as wearing a certain calm dignity and decorum always. Courteous, urbane, with no angularities of character, throughout a long and busy life he seldom gave offence to any one; and when he did give offence he offered his enemy no point of attack. And he had a good luck to match his good temper. Pensions and places he seemed to get without seeking, and to keep when everybody else lost them. "I believe Mr. Addison might be king if he chose," said Swift once, with a twinge of envy. The truth is, however, that Addison's good luck, like most good luck, was no mere accident, but the result of uniform good sense and good humor.

He was born on May-day, 1672. His father, Launcelot Addison, was a clergyman of the Church of England, and, when young Addison was eleven years of age, was

made dean of the cathedral church of Lichfield. Here at home, in the quiet deanery under the shadow of the great cathedral, the boy early learned that courtesy of manner, that interest in the best things of letters, and that respect for the grave proprieties of religion, which he kept all his days. Richard Steele, who began his lifelong friendship with Addison when the two were boys together at the Charterhouse School in London, wrote years after, in "The Tatler," of good Dean Addison: "I remember during all my acquaintance but one man whom I thought to live with his children in equanimity and good grace. It was an unspeakable pleasure to visit or to sit at a meal in that family."

At Oxford, whither he went in 1687, it seems to have been generally thought that Addison would go into the Church. His father was a dean, his mother was a bishop's sister, and all through his life he seemed very like a parson himself; but he could never persuade himself to take orders. He passed ten studious though leisurely years at the university. He was then fortunate enough to be sent to the Continent for further study, on a pension secured him by the good offices of that great Whig statesman, Montague, Lord Halifax. But when, in 1702, Queen Anne came to the throne, and called the Tory party to power, Addison's pension was cancelled, and he was obliged to return to London. Thus far his youth had been one of much promise, but of little performance. He had written some Latin verses that were very good, and some English verses that were not very good. On his return from the Con-

tinent, he printed a rather dull account of his travels, which few people read then, and which nobody reads now. He was known to a little circle of the best people; but when he settled himself in humble lodgings up three flights, in the Haymarket, he was dangerously near poverty. Every one remembers that famous stroke of fortune, two years later, which took Mr. Addison out of his obscurity, and introduced him to a career. In that year 1704, the Duke of Marlborough won the famous victory of Blenheim, and forthwith the little Whig poets began to sing it. But their verses were so atrociously bad that even the minister Godolphin, who pretended to little knowledge in such matters, began to see that the great triumph was suffering at home for want of a poet. In this difficulty he applied to Montague, and Montague referred him to Addison. Thus it came about that the Right Hon. Henry Boyle, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is said to have climbed the stair to the Haymarket lodgings to invite Mr. Addison to write a poem. The poem Mr. Addison wrote at this august invitation was thought to be of most surprising excellence in his day; but posterity has hardly confirmed that estimate. One passage in particular, in which Marlborough was compared to a destroying angel of storm, seems to have captivated the rather sluggish imagination of Godolphin, and won for Addison an appointment to the snug office of commissioner of appeals. From that time until his death he was never out of political life. In 1706 he was made under-secretary of state; next year, elected to Parlia-

ment; next year, appointed chief secretary for Ireland. When the Whigs went out of power in 1710, he lost his employments, but he kept his seat in Parliament. After the death of Queen Anne in 1714, he went to Ireland again as secretary, and not long before his death reached his highest political dignity as secretary of state. It was a career of uninterrupted success.

But it is not his political work that gives Addison his fame. In 1709 Richard Steele made that happiest venture in the history of our literature, — he established "The Tatler." Addison joined his old friend as a contributor to "The Tatler" with its eighteenth number, and soon became an indispensable auxiliary. "When once I had called him in," said Steele generously, "I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The Tatler" came suddenly to an end in January, 1711; and on the 1st of March following, the two friends began that now more famous paper, "The Spectator." "The Spectator" continued daily, with ever-increasing success, until Dec. 6, 1712; and a later series, under the sole conduct of Addison, was issued during the latter half of the year 1714. The remarkable success of these charming papers had established the reputation of Addison as the greatest living master of English prose, when in 1713 he crowned his fame by writing the drama of "Cato." To most readers of to-day, the "Cato" seems little better than a series of sonorous declamations, without movement and without characters. But those who read and heard it in 1713 were not of that way of thinking. It was acted every week-night for a

month, and all the town flocked to see it. "Cato was not so much the wonder of Rome in his day as he is of Britain in ours," writes Mr. Pope. The critics, too, vied with the playgoers in their admiration, and declared that at last we had in England a "correct" play, based on classical models.

With the "Cato," Addison touched the highest point of all his greatness. The second series of "The Spectator" and "The Freeholder"—a somewhat similar paper which he conducted for some months in the year 1715–16—sustained but hardly increased his fame. From 1713 until his death he was the acknowledged head of the little world of letters, the authority and oracle of the wits. He set up an old servant of his, one Buttons, as keeper of a coffee-house in Russell Street; and there Mr. Spectator reigned,

"And gave his little senate laws."

There was only one voice to break the general accord of admiration for the great writer and the genial friend. The story of that memorable rupture between Pope and Addison is too long to be recited here. Mr. Addison seems sometimes, it must be confessed, to have worn towards his rivals a placid air of superiority that might have been very irritating; yet it has been generally agreed that in this quarrel it was not the bland Spectator, but the envious poet, that was most at fault.

The last days of Addison were passed in the dignified retirement of Holland House. For in 1716, after a very assiduous courtship, he had married the great lady

to whom that great house belonged, the Countess dowager of Warwick. It is to be feared that Mr. Spectator in those last days would sometimes have preferred the dinner of herbs at the club; for, unless all reports are false, he must often have found at Holland House something too much of that society which the experience of Solomon pronounced worse than a continual dropping in a very rainy day. "She married him," says Johnson with a wicked chuckle, "on terms much like those on which a Turkish princess is espoused, to whom the Sultan is reported to pronounce, 'Daughter, I give thee this man for thy slave.'"

"Marrying discord in a noble wife,"

was Pope's last fling at his rival. He did not long enjoy the fortune — good or bad — that he had won. His health failed in 1717, and he died June 17, 1719. He had many friends among those people whose friendship was best worth having; and no man in England had fewer enemies.

It is not too much to say that Addison is the founder of modern popular English prose style. He introduced in the "Tatler" and "Spectator" a prose, which, to use the apt though oft-quoted words of Johnson, was "familiar but not coarse, elegant but not ostentatious." Before him, we have in the writings of such men as Sir Thomas Browne or Jeremy Taylor, or Fuller and Walton, a prose eloquent, or poetic, or quaint. Dryden had written a clear and vigorous prose, but only on critical subjects, and for scholarly readers. But about

the beginning of the eighteenth century, a new reading public demanded a new kind of reading. There had grown up a large trading middle class, intelligent, active, curious. Politically this class was every day becoming more powerful; both parties were bidding for its support; and now that the enormous growth of London had drawn together large numbers of this class, within easy reach of the journalist, it was found that the pamphlet of Defoe or Swift was a far more effective political instrument than any speech shut up within the walls of St. Stephen's. Furthermore, with the growth of town life in Queen Anne's reign, there was a great increase of interest in all social matters. Good society began to talk about itself. The gossip of the clubs, the last opera, the fashion or the whim of the day, — these things now began to find their way into literature. In such circumstances we have, for the first time, a clear, vigorous, popular prose. Defoe and Steele were already writing such a prose: to Addison was reserved the credit of seeing that this prose was capable of artistic treatment. That minute care, that trained skill, which had hitherto been reserved for poetry, he bestowed upon his prose papers. He saw that the gravest truths of society and morals gain a new persuasiveness from the graces of style. He saw, also, that in the new vein of satire upon the minor moralities of society, which his friend Steele had opened in "The Tatler," there was opportunity for the nice taste, the delicate fancy, the refined humor, which can raise to the rank of literature a dainty essay upon a fan or a

ruffle. He was the first Englishman to write a prose easy, idiomatic, popular, and at the same time highly finished. Their graceful rhythm, ingenious illustration, nice taste, and delightful humor combine to make Addison's best papers models of familiar composition. Of their sort, what have we had since that is better?

Addison's contributions to the "Spectator" and "Tatler" may be grouped, according to their subjects, in three classes, — critical, ethical, and social. The first two classes have, it must be confessed, little interest for most readers of to-day. Some of the more elaborate critical papers, especially those upon Milton's "Paradise Lost," were accounted very remarkable efforts in their own age, and are still sometimes spoken of in admiration — generally by those who have never read them. But the truth is, Addison's criticism is thoroughly conventional. He gravely sets out to *prove* that the "Paradise Lost" is a great poem, because it conforms to certain external laws of structure. Of what is original in any book, its spiritual vitality and power, such a criticism can tell us very little. If we read any of Addison's critical papers now, it is only those in lighter vein, which touch some contemporary phase of taste or language.

Nor are the moral and religious papers (which usually appeared on Saturdays) likely to fare much better with the modern reader. Mr. Spectator's sermons, short as they are, do sometimes make us yawn. They are all aimed at the head rather than at the heart, being designed to show the reasonableness of a religious life;

but, somehow, they do not seem to touch the doubts and difficulties of these modern days, while their constant parade of prudential motives is not very inspiring. The best papers in this class are those in which a train of grave and earnest thought seems to rise unconsciously out of the narrative, as in that most impressive essay on Westminster Abbey — perhaps the most finished passage in "The Spectator." It is a calm and cheerful religion Mr. Addison has to recommend; and Mr. Addison practised it himself. He would link religion with all the fair humanities of life, and add the charm of a rational piety to the manifold graces of culture and of art.

But it is in the third class of papers that we shall find Addison's best and most enduring work. These social papers on manners, fashions, minor morals, are among the highest examples of lighter prose satire in our own or any language. In them Addison's quick perception, his fertility of invention, his suavity of manner, and his delightful vein of humor are all seen at their best. These papers moreover, even while they seem only to play lightly among the whims and follies of society, reveal a profound insight into character, and are instinct with that broad and gracious human sympathy which marks the greatest masters. For Addison's humor is eminently a good humor; never cynical, and never idle, but springing from wise and healthy moral feeling. His sense of the ethical value of manners gives a certain grave humanity to his writing; however brilliant his pleasantry may be, it is never merely flip-

pant. But, on the other hand, he is never insistent with his morality, and he is never dull. His best papers of this sort have a delicacy, a lightness of touch, that comes only of excellent taste. It is so fatally easy in writing upon such matters, to be too much in earnest, and to pass that line which separates well-bred raillery and gossip from loud banter on the one side, and preaching on the other. But Addison never loses the graceful urbanity of a courteous Spectator. He keeps you smiling, but he never laughs aloud; and although there is a deal of sense and goodness under the bland humor of this kindly observer, yet he never bores you with it. To read Addison's best papers is to take a lesson in good manners as well as in good literature.

He has not the imagination, largeness, intensity, of the greatest writers; but he is certainly among the most pleasing. A man who united in a very high degree goodness and good-nature; who did more than any one else to popularize an English style at once familiar and elegant; who in a delightful variety of social satire showed a grace, urbanity, and humor never since surpassed; and who gave us at least one character, Sir Roger de Coverley, as familiar to us as any other in fiction, — this is the high praise that posterity accords to Joseph Addison.

READINGS FROM ADDISON.

I.

MR. SPECTATOR AND HIS PAPER.

I. MR. SPECTATOR HIMSELF.

I HAVE observed that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure, until he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author. To gratify this curiosity, which is so natural to a reader, I design this paper, and my next, as prefatory discourses to my following writings, and shall give some account in them of the several persons that are engaged in this work. As the chief trouble of compiling, digesting, and correcting will fall to my share, I must do myself the justice to open the work with my own history.

I was born to a small hereditary estate, which, according to the tradition of the village where it lies, was bounded by the same hedges and ditches in William

the Conqueror's time that it is at present, and has been delivered down from father to son whole and entire, without the loss or acquisition of a single field or meadow, during the space of six hundred years. There runs a story in the family, that when my mother was gone with child of me about three months, she dreamed that she was brought to bed of a judge: whether this might proceed from a lawsuit which was then depending in the family, or my father's being a justice of the peace, I cannot determine; for I am not so vain as to think it presaged any dignity that I should arrive at in my future life, though that was the interpretation which the neighborhood put upon it. The gravity of my behavior at my very first appearance in the world, and all the time that I sucked, seemed to favor my mother's dream; for, as she has often told me, I threw away my rattle before I was two months old, and would not make use of my coral until they had taken away the bells from it.

As for the rest of my infancy, there being nothing in it remarkable, I shall pass it over in silence. I find that during my nonage, I had the reputation of a very sullen youth, but was always a favorite of my schoolmaster, who used to say that my parts were solid, and would wear well. I had not been long at the university, before I distinguished myself by a most profound silence; for during the space of eight years, excepting in the public exercises of the college, I scarce uttered the quantity of an hundred words; and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three sentences together

in my whole life. Whilst I was in this learned body I applied myself with so much diligence to my studies, that there are very few celebrated books, either in the learned or the modern tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

Upon the death of my father, I was resolved to travel into foreign countries, and therefore left the university, with the character of an odd, unaccountable fellow, that had a great deal of learning, if I would but show it. An insatiable thirst after knowledge carried me into all the countries of Europe, in which there was any thing new or strange to be seen; nay, to such a degree was my curiosity raised, that, having read the controversies of some great men concerning the antiquities of Egypt, I made a voyage to Grand Cairo, on purpose to take the measure of a pyramid; and, as soon as I had set myself right in that particular, returned to my native country with great satisfaction.

I have passed my latter years in this city, where I am frequently seen in most public places, though there are not above half a dozen of my select friends that know me; of whom my next paper shall give a more particular account. There is no place of general resort, wherein I do not often make my appearance. Sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's,[1] and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little

[1] The coffee-houses mentioned here had each its distinctive character. Will's was the resort of wits, and men of letters: Child's, of the clergy; St. James's, of Whig politicians; the Grecian, of scholars; the Cocoa-tree, of Tory politicians; and Jonathan's, of stock-jobbers.

circular audiences. Sometimes I smoke a pipe at Child's, and, whilst I seem attentive to nothing but the postman, overhear the conversation of every table in the room. I appear on Sunday nights at St. James's coffee-house, and sometimes join the little committee of politics in the inner room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My face is likewise very well known at the Grecian, the Cocoa-tree, and in the theatres both of Drury Lane and the Haymarket. I have been taken for a merchant upon the exchange for above these ten years, and sometimes pass for a Jew in the assembly of stock-jobbers at Jonathan's. In short, wherever I see a cluster of people, I always mix with them, though I never open my lips but in my own club.

Thus I live in the world rather as a spectator of mankind, than as one of the species; by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and artisan, without ever meddling with any practical part in life. I am very well versed in the theory of a husband or a father, and can discern the errors in the economy, business, and diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them; as standers-by discover blots, which are apt to escape those who are in the game. I never espoused any party with violence, and am resolved to observe an exact neutrality between the Whigs and Tories, unless I shall be forced to declare myself by the hostilities of either side. In short, I have acted in all the parts of my life as a looker-on, which is the character I intend to preserve in this paper.

I have given the reader just so much of my history and character as to let him see I am not altogether unqualified for the business I have undertaken. As for other particulars in my life and adventures, I shall insert them in following papers, as I shall see occasion. In the mean time, when I consider how much I have seen, read, and heard, I begin to blame my own taciturnity; and since I have neither time nor inclination to communicate the fulness of my heart in speech, I am resolved to do it in writing, and to print myself out, if possible, before I die. I have been often told by my friends, that it is a pity so many useful discoveries which I have made should be in the possession of a silent man. For this reason, therefore, I shall publish a sheet-full of thoughts every morning, for the benefit of my contemporaries; and if I can any way contribute to the diversion or improvement of the country in which I live, I shall leave it, when I am summoned out of it, with the secret satisfaction of thinking that I have not lived in vain.

There are three very material points which I have not spoken to in this paper; and which, for several important reasons, I must keep to myself, at least for some time: I mean, an account of my name, my age, and my lodgings. I must confess, I would gratify my reader in any thing that is reasonable; but as for these three particulars, though I am sensible they might tend very much to the embellishment of my paper, I cannot yet come to a resolution of communicating them to the public. They would indeed draw me out of that

obscurity which I have enjoyed for many years, and expose me in public places to several salutes and civilities which have been always very disagreeable to me; for the greatest pain I can suffer is the being talked to, and being stared at. It is for this reason, likewise, that I keep my complexion and dress as very great secrets; though it is not impossible but I may make discoveries of both in the progress of the work I have undertaken.

After having been thus particular upon myself, I shall in to-morrow's paper give an account of those gentlemen who are concerned with me in this work; for, as I have before intimated, a plan of it is laid and concerted, as all other matters of importance are, in a club. However, as my friends have engaged me to stand in the front, those who have a mind to correspond with me may direct their letters to The Spectator, at Mr. Buckley's, in Little Britain. For I must further acquaint the reader, that, though our club meets only on Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have appointed a committee to sit every night, for the inspection of all such papers as may contribute to the advancement of the public weal. — *Spectator, No. 1.*

2. MR. SPECTATOR RECOMMENDS HIS PAPER.

It is with much satisfaction that I hear this great city inquiring, day by day, after these my papers, and receiving my morning lectures with a becoming seriousness and attention. My publisher tells me that there are already three thousand of them distributed

very day; so that, if I allow twenty readers to every aper, which I look upon as a modest computation, may reckon about threescore thousand disciples in ondon and Westminster, who I hope will take care o distinguish themselves from the thoughtless herd of heir ignorant and unattentive brethren. Since I have aised myself to so great an audience, I shall spare no ains to make their instruction agreeable, and their iversion useful. For which reasons I shall endeavor o enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with orality, that my readers may, if possible, both ways nd their account in the speculation of the day. And o the end that their virtue and discretion may not be ort, transient, intermitting starts of thought, I have esolved to refresh their memories from day to day ll I have recovered them out of that desperate state f vice and folly into which the age is fallen. The ind that lies fallow but a single day sprouts up in llies that are only to be killed by a constant and ssiduous culture. It was said of Socrates, that he rought philosophy down from heaven to inhabit mong men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said f me, that I have brought philosophy out of closets nd libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs nd assemblies, at tea-tables, and in coffee-houses.

I would therefore, in a very particular manner, rec-mmend these my speculations to all well-regulated milies, that set apart an hour in every morning for a and bread and butter; and would earnestly advise em, for their good, to order this paper to be punc-

tually served up, and to be looked upon as a part of the tea-equipage.

Sir Francis Bacon observes, that a well-written book, compared with its rivals and antagonists, is like Moses' serpent, that immediately swallowed up and devoured those of the Egyptians. I shall not be so vain as to think that where The Spectator appears, the other public prints will vanish: but shall leave it to my reader's consideration, whether it is not much better to be let into the knowledge of one's self, than to hear what passes in Muscovy or Poland; and to amuse ourselves with such writings as tend to the wearing out of ignorance, passion, and prejudice, than such as naturally conduce to inflame hatreds, and make enmities irreconcilable.

In the next place, I would recommend this paper to the daily perusal of those gentlemen, whom I cannot but consider as my good brothers and allies, I mean the fraternity of spectators, who live in the world without having any thing to do in it; and either by the affluence of their fortunes, or laziness of their dispositions, have no other business with the rest of mankind but to look upon them. Under this class of men are comprehended all contemplative tradesmen, titular physicians, fellows of the Royal Society, Templars that are not given to be contentious, and statesmen that are out of business; in short, every one that considers the world as a theatre, and desires to form a right judgment of those who are the actors on it.

There is another set of men that I must likewise lay

claim to, whom I have lately called the blanks of ociety, as being altogether unfurnished with ideas till ne business and conversation of the day has supplied nem. I have often considered these poor souls with n eye of great commiseration, when I have heard nem asking the first man they have met with, whether nere was any news stirring? and, by that means, gath-ring together materials for thinking. These needy ersons do not know what to talk of till about twelve 'clock in the morning; for, by that time, they are retty good judges of the weather, know which way ne wind sits, and whether the Dutch mail be come in. s they lie at the mercy of the first man they meet, nd are grave or impertinent all the day long, accord-ng to the notions which they have imbibed in the norning, I would earnestly entreat them not to stir ut of their chambers till they have read this paper, nd do promise them that I will daily instil into them ich sound and wholesome sentiments as shall have good effect on their conversation for the ensuing velve hours.

But there are none to whom this paper will be more seful than to the female world. I have often thought nere has not been sufficient pains taken in finding out roper employments and diversions for the fair ones. heir amusements seem contrived for them, rather as ey are women, than as they are reasonable creatures, nd are more adapted to the sex than to the species. he toilet is their great scene of business, and the ght adjusting of their hair the principal employment

of their lives. The sorting of a suit of ribbons is reckoned a very good morning's work; and if they make an excursion to a mercer's or a toy-shop, so great a fatigue makes them unfit for any thing else all the day after. Their more serious occupations are sewing and embroidery, and their greatest drudgery the preparation of jellies and sweetmeats. This, I say, is the state of ordinary women; though I know there are multitudes of those of a more elevated life and conversation, that move in an exalted sphere of knowledge and virtue, that join all the beauties of the mind to the ornaments of dress, and inspire a kind of awe and respect, as well as love, into their male beholders. I hope to increase the number of these by publishing this daily paper, which I shall always endeavor to make an innocent, if not an improving entertainment, and by that means at least divert the minds of my female readers from greater trifles. At the same time, as I would fain give some finishing touches to those which are already the most beautiful pieces of human nature, I shall endeavor to point out all those imperfections that are the blemishes, as well as those virtues which are the embellishments, of the sex. In the mean while I hope these my gentle readers, who have so much time on their hands, will not grudge throwing away a quarter of an hour in a day on this paper, since they may do it without any hinderance to business.

I know several of my friends and well-wishers are in great pain for me, lest I should not be able to keep

up the spirit of a paper which I oblige myself to furnish every day; but to make them easy in this particular, I will promise them faithfully to give it over as soon as I grow dull. This I know will be matter of great raillery to the small wits; who will frequently put me in mind of my promise, desire me to keep my word, assure me that it is high time to give over, with many other little pleasantries of the like nature, which men of a little smart genius cannot forbear throwing out against their best friends, when they have such a handle given them of being witty. But let them remember that I do hereby enter my caveat against this piece of raillery. — *Spectator, No. 10.*

3. THE CLUB DISCUSS THE PAPER.

THE club of which I am a member is very luckily composed of such persons as are engaged in different ways of life, and deputed as it were out of the most conspicuous classes of mankind: by this means I am furnished with the greatest variety of hints and materials, and know every thing that passes in the different quarters and divisions, not only of this great city, but of the whole kingdom. My readers too have the satisfaction to find, that there is no rank or degree among them who have not their representative in this club, and that there is always somebody present who will take care of their respective interests, that nothing may be written or published to the prejudice or infringement of their just rights and privileges.

I last night sat very late in company with this select

body of friends, who entertained me with several remarks which they and others had made upon these my speculations, as also with the various success which they had met with among their several ranks and degrees of readers. Will Honeycomb told me, in the softest manner he could, that there were some ladies (but for your comfort, says Will, they are not those of the most wit) that were offended at the liberties I had taken with the opera and the puppet-show; that some of them were likewise very much surprised, that I should think such serious points as the dress and equipage of persons of quality, proper subjects for raillery.

He was going on, when Sir Andrew Freeport took him up short, and told him that the papers he hinted at had done great good in the city, and that all their wives and daughters were the better for them; and further added, that the whole city thought themselves very much obliged to me for declaring my generous intentions to scourge vice and folly as they appear in a multitude, without condescending to be a publisher of particular intrigues. "In short," says Sir Andrew, "if you avoid that foolish beaten road of falling upon aldermen and citizens, and employ your pen upon the vanity and luxury of courts, your paper must needs be of general use."

Upon this, my friend the Templar told Sir Andrew, that he wondered to hear a man of his sense talk after that manner; that the city had always been the province for satire; and that the wits of King Charles's time jested upon nothing else during his whole reign.

He then showed, by the examples of Horace, Juvenal, Boileau, and the best writers of every age, that the follies of the stage and court had never been accounted too sacred for ridicule, how great soever the persons might be that patronized them. "But after all," says he, "I think your raillery has made too great an excursion in attacking several persons of the Inns of Court; and I do not believe you can show me any precedent for your behavior in that particular."

My good friend Sir Roger de Coverley, who had said nothing all this while, began his speech with a pish! and told us that he wondered to see so many men of sense so very serious upon fooleries. "Let our good friend," says he, "attack every one that deserves it: I would only advise you, Mr. Spectator," applying himself to me, "to take care how you meddle with country squires: they are the ornaments of the English nation; men of good heads and sound bodies! And let me tell you, some of them take it ill of you, that you mention fox-hunters with so little respect."

Captain Sentry spoke very sparingly on this occasion. What he said was only to commend my prudence in not touching upon the army, and advised me to continue to act discreetly in that point.

By this time I found every subject of my speculations was taken away from me, by one or other of the club; and began to think myself in the condition of the good man that had one wife who took a dislike to his gray hairs, and another to his black, till by their

picking out what each of them had an aversion to, they left his head altogether bald and naked.

While I was thus musing with myself, my worthy friend the clergyman, who, very luckily for me, was at the club that night, undertook my cause. He told us that he wondered any order of persons should think themselves too considerable to be advised; that it was not quality, but innocence, which exempted men from reproof; that vice and folly ought to be attacked wherever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous stations of life. He further added, that my paper would only serve to aggravate the pains of poverty, if it chiefly exposed those who are already depressed, and in some measure turned into ridicule, by the meanness of their conditions and circumstances. He afterwards proceeded to take notice of the great use this paper might be of to the public, by reprehending those vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the law, and too fantastical for the cognizance of the pulpit. He then advised me to prosecute my undertaking with cheerfulness; and assured me, that, whoever might be displeased with me, I should be approved by all those whose praises do honor to the persons on whom they are bestowed.

The whole club pays a particular deference to the discourse of this gentleman, and are drawn into what he says as much by the candid ingenuous manner with which he delivers himself, as by the strength of argument and force of reason which he makes use of. Will

Honeycomb immediately agreed, that what he had said was right; and that, for his part, he would not insist upon the quarter which he had demanded for the ladies. Sir Andrew gave up the city with the same frankness. The Templar would not stand out; and was followed by Sir Roger and the captain; who all agreed that I should be at liberty to carry the war into what quarter I pleased, provided I continued to combat with criminals in a body, and to assault the vice without hurting the person.

This debate which was held for the good of mankind put me in mind of that which the Roman triumvirate were formerly engaged in for their destruction. Every man at first stood hard for his friend, till they found that by this means they should spoil their proscription; and at last, making a sacrifice of all their acquaintance and relations, furnished out a very decent execution.

Having thus taken my resolutions to march on boldly in the cause of virtue and good sense, and to annoy their adversaries in whatever degree or rank of men they may be found, I shall be deaf for the future to all the remonstrances that shall be made to me on this account. If Punch grows extravagant, I shall reprimand him very freely: if the stage becomes a nursery of folly and impertinence, I shall not be afraid to animadvert upon it. In short, if I meet with any thing in city, court, or country, that shocks modesty or good manners, I shall use my utmost endeavors to make an example of it. I must, however, entreat

every particular person who does me the honor to be a reader of this paper, never to think himself, or any one of his friends or enemies, aimed at in what is said: for I promise him never to draw a faulty character which does not fit at least a thousand people; or to publish a single paper that is not written in the spirit of benevolence, and with a love to mankind. — *Spectator, No. 34.*

4. THE HALFPENNY STAMP RAISES THE PRICE OF THE SPECTATOR.

I FIND, by several letters which I receive daily, that many of my readers would be better pleased to pay three halfpence for my paper than twopence.[1] The ingenious T. W. tells me that I have deprived him of the best part of his breakfast, for that since the rise of my paper he is forced every morning to drink his dish of coffee by itself without the addition of "The Spectator," that used to be better than lace to it. Eugenius informs me very obligingly that he never thought he should have disliked any passage in my paper, but that of late there have been two words in every one of them which he could heartily wish left out; viz., "Price Twopence." I have a letter from a soap-boiler, who condoles with me very affectionately upon the neces-

[1] On the 1st of August, 1712, a halfpenny stamp was imposed on "every pamphlet or paper contained in a half-sheet or any lesser piece of paper." This extinguished at once a considerable number of penny political journals: it was the season of "the fall of the leaf," as Addison wittily said in his first paper after the rise in price. All the other surviving journals raised their price just the cost of the stamp; but The Spectator put on a whole penny, and prospered more than ever.

sity we both lie under of setting an higher price on our commodities, since the late tax has been laid upon them, and desiring me, when I write next on that subject, to speak a word or two upon the duties upon Castle soap. But there is none of these my correspondents, who writes with a greater turn of good sense and elegance of expression, than the generous Philomedes, who advises me to value every "Spectator" at sixpence, and promises that he himself will engage for above a hundred of his acquaintance, who shall take it in at that price.

Letters from the female world are likewise come to me, in great quantities, upon the same occasion; and as I naturally bear a great deference to this part of our species, I am very glad to find that those who approve my conduct in this particular are much more numerous than those who condemn it. A large family of daughters have drawn me up a very handsome remonstrance, in which they set forth, that, their father having refused to take in "The Spectator" since the additional price was set upon it, they offered him unanimously to bate him the article of bread and butter in the tea-table account, provided "The Spectator" might be served up to them every morning as usual. Upon this the old gentleman, being pleased it seems with their desire of improving themselves, has granted them the continuance both of "The Spectator" and their bread and butter, having given particular orders that the tea-table shall be set forth every morning with its customary bill of fare, and without any manner of defalcation.

I thought myself obliged to mention this particular, as it does honor to this worthy gentleman; and if the young lady Lætitia, who sent me this account, will acquaint me with his name, I will insert it at length in one of my papers, if he desires it.

I should be very glad to find out any expedient that might alleviate the expense which this my paper brings to any of my readers; and, in order to it, must propose two points to their consideration. First, that if they retrench any, the smallest particular in their ordinary expense, it will easily make up the halfpenny a day which we have now under consideration. Let a lady sacrifice but a single ribbon to her morning studies, and it will be sufficient; let a family burn but a candle a night less than their usual number, and they may take in "The Spectator" without detriment to their private affairs.

In the next place, if my readers will not go to the price of buying my papers by retail, let them have patience, and they may buy them in the lump without the burden of a tax upon them. My speculations, when they are sold single like cherries upon the stick, are delights for the rich and wealthy; after some time they come to market in greater quantities, and are every ordinary man's money. The truth of it is, they have a certain flavor at their first appearance, from several accidental circumstances of time, place, and person, which they may lose if they are not taken early; but in this case every reader is to consider, whether it is not better for him to be half a year

behindhand with the fashionable and polite part of the world, than to strain himself beyond his circumstances. My bookseller has now about ten thousand of the third and fourth volumes, which he has ready to publish, having already disposed of as large an edition both of the first and second volumes. As he is a person whose head is very well turned for his business, he thinks they would be a very proper present to be made to persons at christenings, marriages, visiting-days, and the like joyful solemnities, as several other books are frequently given at funerals. He has printed them in such a little portable volume, that many of them may be ranged together upon a single plate; and is of opinion that a salver of "Spectators" would be as acceptable an entertainment to the ladies, as a salver of sweetmeats. — *Spectator, No. 488.*

II.

SOCIETY, FASHIONS, MINOR MORALS.

5. THE TULIP MANIA.[1]

I CHANCED to rise very early one particular morning this summer, and took a walk into the country to divert myself among the fields and meadows, while the green was new, and the flowers in their bloom. As at this season of the year every lane is a beautiful walk, and every hedge full of nosegays, I lost myself with a great deal of pleasure among several thickets and bushes that were filled with a great variety of birds, and an agreeable confusion of notes, which formed the pleasantest scene in the world to me who had passed a whole winter in noise and smoke. The freshness of the dews that lay upon every thing about me, with the cool breath of the morning, which inspired the birds with so many delightful instincts, created in

[1] A little after the middle of the seventeenth century, there was a rage for tulips in England. The bulbs were mostly grown in Holland, and sold for fabulous prices. Dealing in them became a kind of speculation: and tulips were bought and sold on the exchange, as stocks are now, without changing hands at all. As much as a thousand pounds has been paid for a single tulip-bulb. The Dutch government finally passed a law that no more than two hundred francs (forty dollars) should be charged for one bulb. By the time Addison was writing, the fever had much abated; yet fancy varieties still brought fancy prices, and it is probable the gardener did not much exaggerate the cost of his dish of soup.

me the same kind of animal pleasure, and made my heart overflow with such secret emotions of joy and satisfaction as are not to be described or accounted for. On this occasion, I could not but reflect upon a beautiful simile in Milton: —

> "As one who long in populous city pent,
> Where houses thick, and sewers, annoy the air,
> Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
> Among the pleasant villages, and farms
> Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight;
> The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
> Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound."

Those who are conversant in the writings of polite authors receive an additional entertainment from the country, as it revives in their memories those charming descriptions with which such authors do frequently abound.

I was thinking of the foregoing beautiful simile in Milton, and applying it to myself, when I observed to the windward of me a black cloud falling to the earth in long trails of rain, which made me betake myself for shelter to a house which I saw at a little distance from the place where I was walking. As I sat in the porch, I heard the voices of two or three persons, who seemed very earnest in discourse. My curiosity was raised when I heard the names of Alexander the Great and Artaxerxes; and as their talk seemed to run on ancient heroes, I concluded there could not be any secret in it; for which reason I thought I might very fairly listen to what they said.

After several parallels between great men, which appeared to me altogether groundless and chimerical, I was surprised to hear one say, "That he valued the Black Prince more than the Duke of Vendosme." How the Duke of Vendosme should become a rival of the Black Prince's, I could not conceive; and was more startled, when I heard a second affirm with great vehemence, "That if the Emperor of Germany was not going off he should like him better than either of them." He added, "That though the season was so changeable, the Duke of Marlborough was in blooming beauty."

I was wondering to myself from whence they had received this odd intelligence, especially when I heard them mention the names of several other great generals, as the Prince of Hesse, and the King of Sweden, who, they said, were both running away. To which they added, what I entirely agreed with them in, "That the Crown of France was very weak, but that the Marshal Villars still kept his colors." At last one of them told the company, "If they would go along with him, he would show them a Chimney Sweeper and a Painted Lady in the same bed, which he was sure would very much please them." The shower which had driven them, as well as myself, into the house, was now over; and as they were passing by me into the garden, I asked them to let me be one of their company.

The gentleman of the house told me, "If I delighted in flowers, it would be worth my while, for that he be-

lieved he could show me such a blow of tulips as was not to be matched in the whole country."

I accepted the offer, and immediately found that they had been talking in terms of gardening, and that the kings and generals they had mentioned were only so many tulips, to which the gardeners, according to their usual custom, had given such high titles and appellations of honor.

I was very much pleased and astonished at the glorious show of these gay vegetables, that arose in great profusion on all the banks about us. Sometimes I considered them, with the eye of an ordinary spectator, as so many beautiful objects, varnished over with a natural gloss, and stained with such a variety of colors as are not to be equalled in any artificial dyes or tinctures. Sometimes I considered every leaf as an elaborate piece of tissue, in which the threads and fibres were woven together in different configurations, which gave a different coloring to the light as it glanced on the several parts of the surface. Sometimes I considered the whole bed of tulips, according to the notion of the greatest mathematician and philosopher that ever lived, as a multitude of optic instruments, designed for the separating light into all those various colors of which it is composed.

I was awakened out of these my philosophical speculations, by observing that the company often seemed to laugh at me. I accidentally praised a tulip as one of the finest I ever saw; upon which they told me it was a common Fool's-coat. Upon that I praised a

second, which it seems was but another kind of Fool's-coat. I had the same fate with two or three more; for which reason I desired the owner of the garden to let me know which were the finest of the flowers, for that I was so unskilful in the art, that I thought the most beautiful were the most valuable, and that those which had the gayest colors were the most beautiful. The gentleman smiled at my ignorance: he seemed a very plain, honest man, and a person of good sense, had not his head been touched with that distemper which Hippocrates calls the *Tulippo-Mania*, Τυλιππο-μανία; insomuch that he would talk very rationally on any subject in the world but a tulip. He told me "That he valued the bed of flowers which lay before us, and was not above twenty yards in length, and two in breadth, more than he would the best hundred acres of land in England;" and added, "That it would have been worth twice the money it is, if a foolish cook-maid of his had not almost ruined him the last winter, by mistaking an handful of tulip-roots for an heap of onions, and by that means (says he) made me a dish of pottage that cost me above a thousand pounds sterling." He then showed me what he thought the finest of his tulips, which I found received all their value from their rarity and oddness, and put me in mind of your great fortunes, which are not always the greatest beauties.

I have often looked upon it as a piece of happiness, that I have never fallen into any of these fantastical tastes, nor esteemed any thing the more for its being

uncommon and hard to be met with. For this reason I look upon the whole country in springtime as a spacious garden, and make as many visits to a sport of daisies, or a bank of violets, as a florist does to his borders and parterres. There is not a bush in blossom within a mile of me which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a daffodil or cowslip that withers away in my neighborhood without my missing it. I walked home in this temper of mind through several fields and meadows with an unspeakable pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence, which has made the most pleasing and most beautiful objects the most ordinary and most common. — *Tatler, No. 218.*

6. SIGNIOR NICOLINI AND THE LION IN THE OPERA.

THERE is nothing that of late years has afforded matter of greater amusement to the town than Signior Nicolini's[1] combat with a lion in the Haymarket, which has been very often exhibited to the general satisfaction of most of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Great Britain. Upon the first rumor of this in-

[1] The Italian opera was a novel form of entertainment in the London of 1711, and Addison seems to have appreciated its absurdities and affectations more than its music. Nicolini was the manager under whom for the first time an opera was sung wholly in Italian on an English stage. *Hydaspes*, by Buonocini, was produced in London in the winter of 1710–11.

"Hydaspes is a sort of profane Daniel, who, being thrown into an amphitheatre to be devoured by a lion, is saved, not by faith, but by love; the presence of his mistress among the spectators inspiring him with such courage, that after appealing to the monster in a minor key, and telling him that he may tear his bosom but cannot touch his heart, he attacks him in the relative major, and strangles him." — SUTHERLAND EDWARDS' *History of the Opera.*

tended combat it was confidently affirmed, and is still believed by many in both galleries, that there would be a tame lion sent from the Tower every opera night, in order to be killed by Hydaspes: this report, though altogether groundless, so universally prevailed in the upper regions of the playhouse, that some of the most refined politicians in those parts of the audience gave it out in a whisper, that the lion was a cousin-german of the tiger who made his appearance in King William's days, and that the stage would be supplied with lions at the public expense, during the whole session. Many likewise were the conjectures of the treatment which this lion was to meet with from the hands of Signior Nicolini: some supposed that he was to subdue him in recitativo, as Orpheus used to serve the wild beasts in his time, and afterwards to knock him on the head; some fancied that the lion would not pretend to lay his paws upon the hero, by reason of the received opinion that a lion will not hurt a virgin; several, who pretended to have seen the opera in Italy, had informed their friends that the lion was to act a part in High Dutch, and roar twice or thrice to a thorough-bass, before he fell at the feet of Hydaspes. To clear up a matter that was so variously reported, I have made it my business to examine whether this pretended lion is really the savage he appears to be, or only a counterfeit.

But before I communicate my discoveries I must acquaint the reader, that upon my walking behind the scenes last winter, as I was thinking on something else,

I accidentally jostled against a monstrous animal that extremely startled me, and, upon my nearer survey of it, appeared to be a lion rampant. The lion, seeing me very much surprised, told me, in a gentle voice, that I might come by him if I pleased; "for," says he, "I do not intend to hurt anybody." I thanked him very kindly, and passed by him; and, in a little time after, saw him leap upon the stage, and act his part with very great applause. It has been observed by several, that the lion has changed his manner of acting twice or thrice since his first appearance; which will not seem strange, when I acquaint my reader that the lion has been changed upon the audience three several times. The first lion was a candle-snuffer, who being a fellow of a testy, choleric temper, overdid his part, and would not suffer himself to be killed so easily as he ought to have done; besides, it was observed of him, that he grew more surly every time he came out of the lion; and having dropt some words in ordinary conversation, as if he had not fought his best, and that he suffered himself to be thrown upon his back in the scuffle, and that he would wrestle with Mr. Nicolini for what he pleased, out of his lion's skin, it was thought proper to discard him; and it is verily believed to this day, that, had he been brought upon the stage another time, he would certainly have done mischief. Besides, it was objected against the first lion, that he reared himself so high upon his hinder paws, and walked in so erect a posture, that he looked more like an old man than a lion.

The second lion was a tailor by trade, who belonged to the playhouse, and had the character of a mild and peaceable man in his profession. If the former was too furious, this was too sheepish, for his part; insomuch that after a short modest walk upon the stage, he would fall at the first touch of Hydaspes, without grappling with him, and giving him an opportunity of showing his variety of Italian trips: it is said, indeed, that he once gave him a rip in his flesh-color doublet, but this was only to make work for himself in his private character of a tailor. I must not omit that it was this second lion who treated me with so much humanity behind the scenes.

The acting lion at present is, as I am informed, a country gentleman who does it for his diversion, but desires his name may be concealed. He says very handsomely, in his own excuse, that he does not act for gain, that he indulges an innocent pleasure in it; and that it is better to pass away an evening in this manner, than in gaming and drinking; but at the same time says, with a very agreeable raillery upon himself, that, if his name should be known, the ill-natured world might call him, *The ass in the lion's skin.* This gentleman's temper is made out of such a happy mixture of the mild and the choleric, that he outdoes both his predecessors, and has drawn together greater audiences than have been known in the memory of man.

I must not conclude my narrative without taking notice of a groundless report that has been raised, to a gentleman's disadvantage of whom I must declare

myself an admirer; namely, that Signior Nicolini and the lion have been seen sitting peaceably by one another and smoking a pipe together behind the scenes; by which their common enemies would insinuate, that it is but a sham combat which they represent upon the stage: but upon inquiry, I find that, if any such correspondence has passed between them, it was not till the combat was over, when the lion was to be looked upon as dead, according to the received rules of the drama. Besides, this is what is practised every day in Westminster Hall, where nothing is more usual than to see a couple of lawyers, who have been tearing each other to pieces in the court, embracing one another as soon as they are out of it.

I would not be thought, in any part of this relation, to reflect upon Signior Nicolini, who in acting this part only complies with the wretched taste of his audience. He knows very well that the lion has many more admirers than himself; as they say of the famous equestrian statue on the Pont-Neuf at Paris, that more people go to see the horse than the king who sits upon it. On the contrary, it gives me a just indignation to see a person whose action gives new majesty to kings, resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus sinking from the greatness of his behavior, and degraded into the character of the London 'prentice. I have often wished that our tragedians would copy after this great master in action. Could they make the same use of their arms and legs, and inform their faces with as significant looks and passions, how glorious would

an English tragedy appear with that action, which is capable of giving a dignity to the forced thoughts, cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Italian opera! In the mean time, I have related this combat of the lion to show what are at present the reigning entertainments of the politer part of Great Britain.

Audiences have often been reproached by writers for the coarseness of their taste; but our present grievance does not seem to be the want of a good taste, but of common-sense. — *Spectator, No. 13.*

7. PARTY PATCHES.[1]

About the middle of last winter I went to see an opera at the theatre in the Haymarket, where I could not but take notice of two parties of very fine women, that had placed themselves in the opposite side boxes, and seemed drawn up in a kind of battle array one against another. After a short survey of them, I found they were patched differently; the faces on one hand being spotted on the right side of the forehead, and those upon the other on the left. I quickly perceived that they cast hostile glances upon one another, and that their patches were placed in those different situations as party signals to distinguish friends from foes. In the middle boxes, between these two opposite bodies, were several ladies who patched indifferently on both sides of their faces, and seemed to sit

[1] This curious custom of sticking upon the face patches of paper of different colors and shapes seems to have been introduced into England as early as the reign of Charles I. in the seventeenth century, and to have been revived at intervals until quite recent times.

there with no other intention but to see the opera. Upon inquiry I found that the body of amazons on my right hand were Whigs, and those on my left Tories; and that those who had placed themselves in the middle boxes were a neutral party, whose faces had not yet declared themselves. These last, however, as I afterwards found, diminished daily, and took their party with one side or the other; insomuch that I observed in several of them, the patches, which were before dispersed equally, are now all gone over to the Whig or Tory side of the face. The censorious say that the men, whose hearts are aimed at, are very often the occasions that one part of the face is thus dishonored, and lies under a kind of disgrace, while the other is so much set off and adorned by the owners; and that the patches turn to the right or to the left, according to the principles of the man who is most in favor. But whatever may be the motives of a few fantastical coquettes, who do not patch for the public good so much as for their own private advantage, it is certain that there are several women of honor, who patch out of principle, and with an eye to the interest of their country. Nay, I am informed that some of them adhere so steadfastly to their party, and are so far from sacrificing their zeal for the public to their passion for any particular person, that in a late draught of marriage articles a lady has stipulated with her husband, that, whatever his opinions are, she shall be at liberty to patch on which side she pleases.

I must here take notice that Rosalinda, a famous

Whig partisan, has most unfortunately a very beautiful mole on the Tory part of her forehead; which, being very conspicuous, has occasioned many mistakes, and given an handle to her enemies to misrepresent her face, as though it had revolted from the Whig interest. But, whatever this natural patch may seem to intimate, it is well known that her notions of government are still the same. This unlucky mole, however, has misled several coxcombs; and, like the hanging-out of false colors, made some of them converse with Rosalinda in what they thought the spirit of her party, when on a sudden she has given them an unexpected fire, that has sunk them all at once. If Rosalinda is unfortunate in her mole, Nigranilla is as unhappy in a pimple, which forces her, against her inclinations, to patch on the Whig side.

I am told that many virtuous matrons, who formerly have been taught to believe that this artificial spotting of the face was unlawful, are now reconciled, by a zeal for their cause, to what they could not be prompted by a concern for their beauty. This way of declaring war upon one another puts me in mind of what is reported of the tigress, that several spots rise in her skin when she is angry; or, as Mr. Cowley has imitated the verses that stand as the motto of this paper: —

> She swells with angry pride,
> And calls forth all her spots on every side.

When I was in the theatre the time above mentioned, I had the curiosity to count the patches on both sides,

and found the Tory patches to be about twenty stronger than the Whig; but to make amends for this small inequality, I the next morning found the whole puppet-show filled with faces spotted after the Whiggish manner. Whether or no the ladies had retreated hither in order to rally their forces, I cannot tell; but the next night they came in so great a body to the opera, that they outnumbered the enemy.

This account of party patches will, I am afraid, appear improbable to those who live at a distance from the fashionable world; but as it is a distinction of a very singular nature, and what perhaps may never meet with a parallel, I think I should not have discharged the office of a faithful Spectator, had not I recorded it.

I have, in former papers, endeavored to expose this party rage in women, as it only serves to aggravate the hatred and animosities that reign among men, and in a great measure deprives the fair sex of those peculiar charms with which nature has endued them.

When the Romans and Sabines were at war, and just upon the point of giving battle, the women who were allied to both of them interposed with so many tears and entreaties, that they prevented the mutual slaughter which threatened both parties, and united them together in a firm and lasting peace.

I would recommend this noble example to our British ladies at a time when their country is torn with so many unnatural divisions, that, if they continue, it will be a misfortune to be born in it. The Greeks thought it so improper for women to interest them-

selves in competitions and contentions, that for this reason, among others, they forbade them under pain of death to be present at the Olympic games, notwithstanding these were the public diversions of all Greece.

As our English women excel those of all nations in beauty, they should endeavor to outshine them in all other accomplishments proper to the sex, and to distinguish themselves as tender mothers and faithful wives, rather than as furious partisans. Female virtues are of a domestic turn. The family is the proper province for private women to shine in. If they must be showing their zeal for the public, let it not be against those who are perhaps of the same family, or at least of the same religion or nation, but against those who are the open, professed, undoubted enemies of their faith, liberty, and country. When the Romans were pressed with a foreign enemy, the ladies voluntarily contributed all their rings and jewels to assist the government under a public exigence; which appeared so laudable an action in the eyes of their countrymen, that from thenceforth it was permitted by a law to pronounce public orations at the funeral of a woman in the praise of the deceased person, which till that time was peculiar to men. Would our English ladies, instead of sticking on a patch against those of their own country, show themselves so truly public-spirited as to sacrifice every one her necklace against the common enemy, what decrees ought not to be made in favor of them!

Since I am recollecting upon this subject such passages as occur to my memory out of ancient authors, I cannot omit a sentence in the celebrated funeral oration of Pericles, in Thucydides, which he made in honor of those brave Athenians that were slain in a fight with the Lacedæmonians. After having addressed himself to the several ranks and orders of his countrymen, and shown them how they should behave themselves in the public cause, he turns to the female part of his audience: 'And as for you,' says he, 'I shall advise you in very few words: aspire only to those virtues that are peculiar to your sex; follow your natural modesty, and think it your greatest commendation not to be talked of one way or other." — *Spectator, No. 81.*

8. THE EXERCISE OF THE FAN.

I DO not know whether to call the following letter a satire upon coquettes, or a representation of their several fantastical accomplishments, or what other title to give it; but as it is, I shall communicate it to the public. It will sufficiently explain its own intentions, so that I shall give it my readers at length, without either preface or postscript.

MR. SPECTATOR, — Women are armed with fans, as men with swords, and sometimes do more execution with them. To the end therefore that ladies may be entire mistresses of the weapon which they bear, I have erected an academy for the training-up of young women in the "Exercise of the Fan," according to the most fashionable airs and motions that are now practised at court. The ladies who "carry" fans under me are

drawn up twice a day in my great hall, where they are instructed in the use of their arms, and exercised by the following words of command:—

"Handle your fans,
Unfurl your fans,
Discharge your fans,
Ground your fans,
Recover your fans,
Flutter your fans."

By the right observation of these few plain words of command, a woman of a tolerable genius, who will apply herself diligently to her exercise for the space of but one half year, shall be able to give her fan all the graces that can possibly enter into that little modish machine. But to the end that my readers may form to themselves a right notion of this exercise, I beg leave to explain it to them in all its parts. When my female regiment is drawn up in array, with every one her weapon in her hand, upon my giving the word to "handle their fan," each of them shakes her fan at me with a smile, then gives her right-hand woman a tap upon the shoulder, then presses her lips with the extremity of her fan, then lets her arms fall in an easy motion, and stands in a readiness to receive the next word of command. All this is done with a close fan, and is generally learned in the first week.

The next motion is that of "unfurling the fan," in which are comprehended several little flirts and vibrations, as also gradual and deliberate openings, with many voluntary fallings asunder in the fan itself, that are seldom learned under a month's practice. This part of the exercise pleases the spectators more than any other, as it discovers on a sudden an infinite number of cupids, garlands, altars, birds, beasts, rainbows, and the like agreeable figures, that display themselves to view, whilst every one in the regiment holds a picture in her hand.

Upon my giving the word to "discharge their fans," they give one general crack that may be heard at a considerable

distance when the wind sits fair. This is one of the most difficult parts of the exercise; but I have several ladies with me who at their first entrance could not give a pop loud enough to be heard at the further end of a room, who can now "discharge a fan" in such a manner that it shall make a report like a pocket-pistol. I have likewise taken care (in order to hinder young women from letting off their fans in wrong places or unsuitable occasions) to show upon what subject the crack of a fan may come in properly. I have likewise invented a fan with which a girl of sixteen, by the help of a little wind, which is enclosed about one of the largest sticks, can make as loud a crack as a woman of fifty with an ordinary fan.

When the fans are thus "discharged," the word of command in course is to "ground their fans." This teaches a lady to quit her fan gracefully when she throws it aside in order to take up a pack of cards, adjust a curl of hair, replace a falling pin, or apply herself to any other matter of importance. This part of the exercise, as it only consists in tossing a fan with an air, upon a long table (which stands by for that purpose), may be learned in two days' time as well as in a twelvemonth.

When my female regiment is thus disarmed, I generally let them walk about the room for some time, when on a sudden (like ladies that look upon their watches after a long visit) they all of them hasten to their arms, catch them up in a hurry, and place themselves in their proper stations, upon my calling out, "Recover your fans!" This part of the exercise is not difficult, provided a woman applies her thoughts to it.

The "fluttering of the fan" is the last and indeed the masterpiece of the whole exercise; but if a lady does not misspend her time, she may make herself mistress of it in three months. I generally lay aside the dog-days and the hot time of the summer for the teaching this part of the "exercise;" for as soon as ever I pronounce, "Flutter your fans," the place is filled with so many zephyrs and gentle breezes as are very refreshing in that season of the year, though they might be dangerous to ladies of a tender constitution in any other.

There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the "flutter of a fan:" there is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarce any emotion in the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the fan; insomuch, that, if I only see the fan of a disciplined lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes. I have seen a fan so very angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover who provoked it to have come within the wind of it; and at other times so very languishing, that I have been glad for the lady's sake the lover was at a sufficient distance from it. I need not add, that a fan is either a prude or coquette, according to the nature of the person who bears it. To conclude my letter, I must acquaint you that I have from my own observations compiled a little treatise for the use of my scholars, entitled "The Passions of the Fan;" which I will communicate to you, if you think it may be of use to the public. I shall have a general review on Thursday next; to which you shall be very welcome if you will honor it with your presence.

I am, etc.

P. S. I teach young gentlemen the whole act of gallanting a fan.

N. B. I have several little plain fans made for this use, to avoid expense.

9. THE HOOD.

One of the fathers, if I am rightly informed, has defined a woman to be ζῶον φιλοκόσμον, an animal that delights in finery. I have already treated of the sex in two or three papers, conformably to this definition; and have in particular observed, that in all ages they have been more careful than the men to adorn that part of the head which we generally call the outside.

This observation is so very notorious, that when in ordinary discourse we say a man has a fine head, a long head, or a good head, we express ourselves metaphorically, and speak in relation to his understanding; whereas, when we say of a woman, she has a fine, a long, or a good head, we speak in relation to her commode.

It is observed among birds, that Nature has lavished all her ornaments upon the male, who very often appears in a most beautiful headdress; whether it be a crest, a comb, a tuft of feathers, or a natural little plume, erected like a kind of pinnacle on the very top of the head. As Nature, on the contrary, has poured out her charms in the greatest abundance upon the female part of our species, so they are very assiduous in bestowing upon themselves the finest garnitures of art. The peacock, in all his pride, does not display half the colors that appear in the garments of a British lady, when she is dressed either for a ball or a birthday.

But to return to our female heads. The ladies have been for some time in a kind of moulting season, with regard to that part of their dress, having cast great quantities of ribbon, lace, and cambric, and in some measure reduced that part of the human figure to the beautiful globular form which is natural to it. We have for a great while expected what kind of ornament would be substituted in the place of those antiquated commodes. But our female projectors were all the last summer so taken up with the improvement

of their petticoats, that they had not time to attend to any thing else; but having at length sufficiently adorned their lower parts, they now begin to turn their thoughts upon the other extremity as well, remembering the old kitchen proverb, "That if you light a fire at both ends, the middle will shift for itself."

I am engaged in this speculation by a sight which I lately met with at the opera. As I was standing in the hinder part of the box, I took notice of a little cluster of women sitting together in the prettiest colored hoods that I ever saw. One of them was blue, another yellow, and another philomot; the fourth was of a pink color, and the fifth of a pale green. I looked with as much pleasure upon this little party-colored assembly, as upon a bed of tulips, and did not know at first whether it might not be an embassy of Indian queens; but upon my going about into the pit, and taking them in front, I was immediately undeceived, and saw so much beauty in every face, that I found them all to be English. Such eyes and lips, cheeks and foreheads, could be the growth of no other country. The complexion of their faces hindered me from observing any further the color of their hoods, though I could easily perceive by that unspeakable satisfaction which appeared in their looks, that their own thoughts were wholly taken up on those pretty ornaments they wore upon their heads.

I am informed that this fashion spreads daily, insomuch that the Whig and Tory ladies begin already to hang out different colors, and to show their principles

in their headdress. Nay, if I may believe my friend Will Honeycomb, there is a certain old coquette of his acquaintance, who intends to appear very suddenly in a rainbow hood, like the Iris in Dryden's Virgil, not questioning but that among such a variety of colors she shall have a charm for every heart.

My friend Will, who very much values himself upon his great insights into gallantry, tells me that he can already guess at the humor a lady is in by her hood, as the courtiers of Morocco know the disposition of their present emperor by the color of the dress which he puts on. When Melesinda wraps her head in flame-color, her heart is set upon execution. When she covers it with purple, I would not, says he, advise her lover to approach her; but if she appears in white, it is peace, and he may hand her out of her box with safety.

Will informs me likewise, that these hoods may be used as signals. Why else, says he, does Cornelia always put on a black hood when her husband is gone into the country?

Such are my friend Honeycomb's dreams of gallantry. For my own part, I impute this diversity of colors in the hoods to the diversity of complexion in the faces of my pretty countrywomen. Ovid, in his "Art of Love," has given some precepts as to this particular; though I find they are different from those which prevail among the moderns. He recommends a red striped silk to the pale complexion, white to the brown, and dark to the fair. On the contrary, my

friend Will, who pretends to be a greater master in this art than Ovid, tells me that the palest features look the most agreeable in white sarcenet, that a face which is over-flushed appears to advantage in the deepest scarlet, and that the darkest complexion is not a little alleviated by a black hood. In short, he is for losing the color of the face in that of the hood, as a fire burns dimly and a candle goes half out in the light of the sun. This, says he, your Ovid himself has hinted, when he treats of these matters, when he tells us that the blue water-nymphs are dressed in sky-colored garments; and that Aurora, who always appears in the light of the rising sun, is robed in saffron.

Whether these his observations are justly grounded, I cannot tell; but I have often known him, as we have stood together behind the ladies, praise or dispraise the complexion of a face which he never saw, from observing the color of her hood, and has been very seldom out in these his guesses.

As I have nothing more at heart than the honor and improvement of the fair sex,[1] I cannot conclude this paper without an exhortation to the British ladies, that they would excel the women of all other nations as much in virtue and good sense as they do in beauty, which they may certainly do, if they will be as industrious to cultivate their minds as they are to adorn their bodies. In the mean while I shall recommend

[1] Some of the Spectator's critics thought he harped rather too much on this string. "I will not meddle with the Spectator," said Swift: "let him 'fair sex' it to the world's end."

to their most serious considerations the saying of an old Greek poet, —

Γυναικὶ κόσμος ὁ τροπος, κοὐ χρυσια.[1]

10. A LADY'S LIBRARY.

Some months ago my friend Sir Roger, being in the country, enclosed a letter to me, directed to a certain lady, whom I shall here call by the name of Leonora, and, as it contained matters of consequence, desired me to deliver it to her with my own hand. Accordingly I waited upon her ladyship pretty early in the morning, and was desired by her woman to walk into her lady's library, till such time as she was in readiness to receive me. The very sound of a lady's library gave me a great curiosity to see it; and, as it was some time before the lady came to me, I had an opportunity of turning over a great many of her books, which were ranged together in a very beautiful order. At the end of the folios (which were finely bound and gilt) were great jars of china placed one above another in a very noble piece of architecture. The quartos were separated from the octavos by a pile of smaller vessels, which rose in a delightful pyramid. The octavos were bounded by tea-dishes of all shapes, colors, and sizes, which were so disposed on a wooden frame, that they looked like one continued pillar indented with the finest strokes of sculpture, and stained with the greatest variety of dyes. That part of the

[1] Manners, and not dress, are the ornament of woman.

library which was designed for the reception of plays and pamphlets, and other loose papers, was enclosed in a kind of square, consisting of one of the prettiest grotesque works that I ever saw, and made up of scaramouches, lions, monkeys, mandarins, trees, shells, and a thousand other odd figures in china-ware. In the midst of the room was a little japan table, with a quire of gilt paper upon it, and upon the paper a silver snuff-box made in the shape of a little book. I found there were several other counterfeit books upon the upper shelves, which were carved in wood, and served only to fill up the number, like fagots in the muster of a regiment. I was wonderfully pleased with such a mixed kind of furniture as seemed very suitable both to the lady and the scholar, and did not know at first whether I should fancy myself in a grotto or in a library.

Upon my looking into the books, I found there were some few which the lady had bought for her own use, but that most of them had been got together, either because she had heard them praised, or because she had seen the authors of them. Among several that I examined, I very well remember these that follow: —

Ogleby's Virgil.

Dryden's Juvenal.

Cassandra.

Cleopatra.

Astræa.

Sir Isaac Newton's works.

The Grand Cyrus; with a pin stuck in one of the middle leaves.

Pembroke's Arcadia.

Locke on Human Understanding; with a paper of patches in it.

A spelling-book.

A dictionary for the explanation of hard words.

Sherlock upon Death.

The Fifteen Comforts of Matrimony.

Sir William Temple's Essays.

Father Malbranche's Search after Truth, translated into English.

A book of Novels.

The Academy of Compliments.

Culpepper's Midwifery.

The Ladies' Calling.

Tales in Verse, by Mr. Durfey; bound in red leather, gilt on the back, and doubled down in several places.

All the classic authors, in wood.

A set of Elzevirs by the same hand.

Clelia; which opened of itself in the place that describes two lovers in a bower.

Baker's Chronicle.

Advice to a Daughter.

The New Atalantis, with a key to it.

Mr. Steele's Christian Hero.

A Prayer-book; with a bottle of Hungary water by the side of it.

Dr. Sacheverell's Speech.

Fielding's Trial.

Seneca's Morals.

Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.

La Ferte's Instructions for Country-dances.

I was taking a catalogue in my pocket-book of these and several other authors, when Leonora entered, and, upon my presenting her with the letter from the knight, told me with an unspeakable grace, that she hoped Sir Roger was in good health: I answered "Yes," for I hate long speeches, and after a bow or two retired.

Leonora was formerly a celebrated beauty, and is still a very lovely woman. She has been a widow for two or three years, and being unfortunate in her first marriage has taken a resolution never to venture upon a second. She has no children to take care of, and leaves the management of her estate to my good friend Sir Roger. But as the mind naturally sinks into a kind of lethargy, and falls asleep, that is not agitated by some favorite pleasures and pursuits, Leonora has turned all the passions of her sex into a love of books and retirement. She converses chiefly with men, as she has often said herself, but it is only in their writings; and admits of very few male visitants, except my friend Sir Roger, whom she hears with great pleasure, and without scandal. As her reading has lain very much among romances, it has given her a very particular turn of thinking, and discovers itself even in her house, her gardens, and her furniture. Sir Roger has entertained me an hour together with a description of her country-seat, which is situated in a kind of wilderness, about an hundred miles distant from London, and looks like a little enchanted palace. The rocks about her are shaped into artificial grottos covered

with woodbines and jessamines. The woods are cut into shady walks, twisted into bowers, and filled with cages of turtles. The springs are made to run among pebbles, and by that means taught to murmur very agreeably. They are likewise collected into a beautiful lake, that is inhabited by a couple of swans, and empties itself by a little rivulet which runs through a green meadow, and is known in the family by the name of "The purling stream." The knight likewise tells me, that this lady preserves her game better than any of the gentlemen in the country: not, says Sir Roger, that she sets so great a value upon her partridges and pheasants as upon her larks and nightingales: for she says that every bird which is killed in her ground will spoil a concert, and that she shall certainly miss him the next year.

When I think how oddly this lady is improved by learning, I look upon her with a mixture of admiration and pity. Amidst these innocent entertainments which she has formed to herself, how much more valuable does she appear than those of her sex who employ themselves in diversions that are less reasonable, though more in fashion? What improvements would a woman have made, who is so susceptible of impressions from what she reads, had she been guided to such books as have a tendency to enlighten the understanding and rectify the passions, as well as to those which are of little more use than to divert the imagination!

But the manner of a lady's employing herself usefully in reading shall be the subject of another paper, in

which I design to recommend such particular books as may be proper for the improvement of the sex. And as this is a subject of a very nice nature, I shall desire my correspondents to give me their thoughts upon it. — *Spectator, No. 37.*

II. PRIDE OF BIRTH.

HORACE, Juvenal, Boileau, and indeed the greatest writers in almost every age, have exposed with all the strength of wit and good sense, the vanity of a man's valuing himself upon his ancestors, and endeavored to show that true nobility consists in virtue, not in birth. With submission, however, to so many great authorities, I think they have pushed this matter a little too far. We ought in gratitude to honor the posterity of those who have raised either the interest or reputation of their country, and by whose labors we ourselves are more happy, wise, or virtuous than we should have been without them. Besides, naturally speaking, a man bids fairer for greatness of soul, who is the descendant of worthy ancestors, and has good blood in his veins, than one who is come of an ignoble and obscure parentage. For these reasons, I think a man of merit, who is derived from an illustrious line, is very justly to be regarded more than a man of equal merit who has no claim to hereditary honors. Nay, I think those who are indifferent in themselves, and have nothing else to distinguish them but the virtues of their forefathers, are to be looked upon with a degree of veneration even upon that account, and to be more

respected than the common run of men who are of low and vulgar extraction.

After having thus ascribed due honors to birth and parentage, I must, however, take notice of those who arrogate to themselves more honors than are due to them upon this account. The first are such who are not enough sensible that vice and ignorance taint the blood, and that an unworthy behavior degrades and disennobles a man in the eyes of the world, as much as birth and family aggrandize and exalt him.

The second are those who believe a *new* man of an elevated merit is not more to be honored than an insignificant and worthless man who is descended from a long line of patriots and heroes; or, in other words, behold with contempt a person who is such a man as the first founder of their family was, upon whose reputation they value themselves.

But I shall chiefly apply myself to those whose quality sits uppermost in all their discourses and behavior. An empty man of a great family is a creature that is scarce conversible. You read his ancestry in his smile, in his air, in his eyebrow. He has, indeed, nothing but his nobility to give employment to his thoughts. Rank and precedency are the important points which he is always discussing within himself. A gentleman of this turn began a speech in one of King Charles's parliaments: "Sir, I had the honor to be born at a time" — upon which a rough, honest gentleman took him up short, "I would fain know what that gentleman means: is there any one in this house that has *not*

had the honor to be born as well as himself?" The good sense which reigns in our nation has pretty well destroyed this starched behavior among men who have seen the world, and know that every gentleman will be treated upon a foot of equality. But there are many who have had their education among women, dependents or flatterers, that lose all the respect which would otherwise be paid them, by being too assiduous in procuring it.

My Lord Froth has been so educated in punctilio, that he governs himself by a ceremonial in all the ordinary occurrences of life. He measures out his bow to the degree of the person he converses with. I have seen him in every inclination of the body, from a familiar nod to the low stoop in the salutation-sign. I remember five of us, who were acquainted with one another, met together one morning at his lodgings, when a wag of the company was saying, it would be worth while to observe how he would distinguish us at his first entrance. Accordingly he no sooner came into the room, but, casting his eye about, "My lord such a one (says he) your most humble servant. — Sir Richard, your humble servant. — Your servant, Mr. Ironside. — Mr. Ducker, how do you do? — Hah! Frank, are you there?"

There is nothing more easy than to discover a man whose head is full of his family. Weak minds that have imbibed a strong tincture of the nursery, younger brothers that have been brought up to nothing, superannuated retainers to a great house,

have generally their thoughts taken up with little else.

I had some years ago an aunt of my own, by name Mrs. Martha Ironside, who would never marry beneath herself, and is supposed to have died a maid in the fourscorth year of her age. She was the chronicle of our family, and passed away the greatest part of the last forty years of her life in recounting the antiquity, marriages, exploits, and alliances of the Ironsides. Mrs. Martha conversed generally with a knot of old virgins, who were likewise of good families, and had been very cruel all the beginning of the last century. They were every one of them as proud as Lucifer, but said their prayers twice a day, and in all other respects were the best women in the world. If they saw a fine petticoat at church, they immediately took to pieces the pedigree of her that wore it, and would lift up their eyes to heaven at the confidence of the saucy minx, when they found she was an honest tradesman's daughter. It is impossible to describe the pious indignation that would rise in them at the sight of a man who lived plentifully on an estate of his own getting. They were transported with zeal beyond measure, if they heard of a young woman's matching into a great family upon account only of her beauty, her merit, or her money. In short, there was not a female within ten miles of them that was in possession of a gold watch, a pearl necklace, or a piece of Mechlin lace, but they examined her title to it. My aunt Martha used to chide me very frequently for not sufficiently

valuing myself. She would not eat a bit all dinner-time, if at an invitation she found she had been seated below herself; and would frown upon me for an hour together, if she saw me give place to any man under a baronet. As I was once talking to her of a wealthy citizen whom she had refused in her youth, she declared to me with great warmth, that she preferred a man of quality in his shirt to the richest man upon the change in a coach and six. She pretended that our family was nearly related by the mother's side to half a dozen peers; but as none of them knew any thing of the matter, we always kept it as a secret among ourselves. A little before her death, she was reciting to me the history of my forefathers; but dwelling a little longer than ordinary upon the actions of Sir Gilbert Ironside, who had a horse shot under him at Edgehill fight, I gave an unfortunate *pish!* and asked, "What was all this to me?" upon which she retired to her closet, and fell a-scribbling for three hours together; in which time, as I afterwards found, she struck me out of her will, and left all that she had to my sister Margaret, a wheedling baggage, that used to be asking questions about her great-grandfather from morning to night. She now lies buried among the family of the Ironsides, with a stone over her, acquainting the reader that she died at the age of eighty years, a spinster, and that she was descended of the ancient family of the Ironsides; after which follows the genealogy drawn up by her own hand. — *Guardian, No. 137.*

12. THE MYSTERIOUS LETTER.

I HAVE received private advice from some of my correspondents, that if I would give my paper a general run I should take care to season it with scandal. I have indeed observed of late, that few writings sell which are not filled with great names and illustrious titles. The reader generally casts his eye upon a new book, and if he finds several letters separated from one another by a dash, he buys it up, and peruses it with great satisfaction. An *M* and an *h*, a *T* and an *r*, with a short line between them, has sold many an insipid pamphlet. Nay, I have known a whole edition go off by virtue of two or three well-written *&c.'s*.

A sprinkling of the words "faction," "Frenchman," "Papist," "plunderer," and the like significant terms, in an Italic character, have also a very good effect upon the eye of the purchaser; not to mention "scribbler," "liar," "rogue," "rascal," "knave," and "villain," without which it is impossible to carry on a modern controversy.

Our party writers are so sensible of the secret virtue of an innuendo to recommend their productions, that of late they never mention the Q—n or P———t at length, though they speak of them with honor, and with that deference which is due to them from every private person. It gives a secret satisfaction to a peruser of these mysterious works, that he is able to decipher them without help, and by the strength of his own natural parts to fill up a blank space, or

make out a word that has only the first or last letter to it.

Some of our authors indeed, when they would be more satirical than ordinary, omit only the vowels of a great man's name, and fall most unmercifully upon all the consonants. This way of writing was first of all introduced by T–m Br–wn,[1] of facetious memory, who, after having gutted a proper name of all its intermediate vowels, used to plant it in his works, and make as free with it as he pleased, without any danger of the statute.

That I may imitate these celebrated authors, and publish a paper which shall be more taking than ordinary, I have here drawn up a very curious libel, in which a reader of penetration will find a great deal of concealed satire, and, if he be acquainted with the present posture of affairs, will easily discover the meaning of it.

"If there are four persons in the nation who endeavor to bring all things into confusion, and ruin their native country, I think every honest Engl–shm–n ought to be upon his guard. That there are such, every one will agree with me who hears me name ****, with his first friend and favorite ****, not to mention ****, nor ****. These people may cry ch–rch, ch–rch, as long as they please; but to use a homely proverb, The proof of the p–dd–ng is in the eating. This I am sure of, that if a certain prince should concur with a certain prelate (and we have Monsieur Z——n's word for it),

[1] Thomas Brown, a forgotten writer of Dryden's time.

our posterity would be in a sweet p–ckle. Must the British nation suffer forsooth, because my Lady Q–p–t–s has been disobliged? Or is it reasonable that our English fleet, which used to be the terror of the ocean, should lie wind-bound for the sake of a ——? I love to speak out, and declare my mind clearly, when I am talking for the good of my country. I will not make my court to an ill man, though he were a B——y or a T——t. Nay, I would not stick to call so wretched a politician a traitor, an enemy to his country, and a bl–nd–rb–ss," etc., etc.

The remaining part of this political treatise, which is written after the manner of the most celebrated authors in Great Britain, I may communicate to the public at a more convenient season. In the mean while I shall leave this with my curious reader, as some ingenious writers do their enigmas; and if any sagacious person can fairly unriddle it I will print his explanation, and, if he pleases, acquaint the world with his name.

I hope this short essay will convince my readers, it is not for want of abilities that I avoid state-tracts, and that, if I would apply my mind to it, I might in a little time be as great a master of the political scratch as any of the most eminent writers of the age. I shall only add, that in order to outshine all the modern race of Syncopists, and thoroughly content my English readers, I intend shortly to publish a "Spectator" that shall not have a single vowel in it. — *Spectator, No. 567.*

13. COFFEE-HOUSE COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE LETTER.

I was yesterday in a coffee-house not far from the Royal Exchange, where I observed three persons in close conference over a pipe of tobacco; upon which, having filled one for my own use, I lighted it at the little wax candle that stood before them, and, after having thrown in two or three whiffs amongst them, sat down and made one of the company. I need not tell my reader, that lighting a man's pipe at the same candle is looked upon among brother-smokers as an overture to conversation and friendship. As we here laid our heads together in a very amicable manner, being intrenched under a cloud of our own raising, I took up the last "Spectator," and casting my eye over it, "'The Spectator,'" says I, "is very witty to-day;" upon which a lusty, lethargic old gentleman, who sat at the upper end of the table, having gradually blown out of his mouth a great deal of smoke, which he had been collecting for some time before, "Ay," says he, "more witty than wise, I am afraid." His neighbor who sat at his right hand immediately colored, and, being an angry politician, laid down his pipe with so much wrath that he broke it in the middle, and by that means furnished me with a tobacco-stopper. I took it up very sedately, and, looking him full in the face, made use of it from time to time all the while he was speaking. "This fellow," says he, "can't for his life keep out of politics. Do you see how he abuses four great men here?" I fixed my eye very attentively on

the paper, and asked him if he meant those who were represented by asterisks. "Asterisks," says he, "do you call them? they are all of them stars. He might as well have put garters to them. Then pray do but mind the two or three next lines: ch–rch and p–dd–ng in the same sentence! our clergy are very much beholden to him." Upon this the third gentleman, who was of a mild disposition, and, as I found, a Whig in his heart, desired him not to be too severe upon "The Spectator" neither; "For," says he, "you find he is very cautious of giving offence, and has therefore put two dashes into his pudding." — "A fig for his dash!" says the angry politician. "In his next sentence he gives a plain innuendo, that our posterity will be in a sweet p–ckle. What does the fool mean by his pickle? Why does he not write it at length if he means honestly?" — "I have read over the whole sentence," says I; "but I look upon the parenthesis in the belly of it to be the most dangerous part, and as full of insinuations as it can hold. But who," says I, "is my Lady Q–p–t–s?" — "Ay, answer that if you can, sir," says the furious statesman to the poor Whig that sat over against him. But without giving him time to reply, "I do assure you," says he, "were I my Lady Q–p–t–s, I would sue him for *scandalum magnatum*. What is the world come to? Must everybody be allowed to ——?" He had by this time filled a new pipe, and applying it to his lips, when we expected the last words of his sentence, put us off with a whiff of tobacco; which he redoubled with so much rage and

trepidation that he almost stifled the whole company. After a short pause I owned that I thought "The Spectator" had gone too far in writing so many letters of my Lady Q–p–t–s's name; "But, however," says I, "he has made a little amends for it in his next sentence, where he leaves a blank space without so much as a consonant to direct us. I mean," says I, "after those words, 'the fleet, that used to be the terror of the ocean, should be wind-bound for the sake of a ——'; after which ensues a chasm, that in my opinion looks modest enough." — "Sir," says my antagonist, "you may easily know his meaning by his gaping: I suppose he designs his chasm, as you call it, for a hole to creep out at; but I believe it will hardly serve his turn. Who can endure to see the great officers of state, the B——ys and T——ts, treated after so scurrilous a manner?" — "I can't imagine," says I, "who they are 'The Spectator' means." — "No?" says he, — "your humble servant, sir!" Upon which he flung himself back in his chair after a contemptuous manner, and smiled upon the old lethargic gentleman on his left hand, who I found was his great admirer. The Whig, however, had begun to conceive a good will towards me, and, seeing my pipe out, very generously offered me the use of his box; but I declined it with great civility, being obliged to meet a friend about that time in another quarter of the city.

At my leaving the coffee-house, I could not forbear reflecting with myself upon that gross tribe of fools who may be termed the over-wise, and upon the diffi-

culty of writing any thing in this censorious age, which a weak head may not construe into private satire and personal reflection.

A man who has a good nose at an innuendo smells treason and sedition in the most innocent words that can be put together, and never sees a vice or folly stigmatized, but finds out one or other of his acquaintance pointed at by the writer. I remember an empty pragmatical fellow in the country, who, upon reading over "The Whole Duty of Man,"[1] had written the names of several persons in the village at the side of every sin which is mentioned by that excellent author; so that he had converted one of the best books in the world into a libel against the squire, church-wardens, overseers of the poor, and all other the most considerable persons in the parish. This book, with these extraordinary marginal notes, fell accidentally into the hands of one who had never seen it before; upon which there arose a current report that somebody had written a book against the squire, and the whole parish. The minister of the place, having at that time a controversy with some of his congregation upon the account of his tithes, was under some suspicion of being the author, until the good man set his people right, by showing them that the satirical passages might be applied to several others of two or three neighboring villages, and that the book was writ against all the sinners in England. — *Spectator, No. 568.*

[1] A very popular religious book, first published in 1660. It went through several editions, and was widely read, but to this day its author is unknown.

14. THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

THERE is no place in the town which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange. It gives me a secret satisfaction, and, in some measure, gratifies my vanity, as I am an Englishman, to see so rich an assembly of countrymen and foreigners consulting together upon the private business of mankind, and making this metropolis a kind of emporium for the whole earth. I must confess I look upon High Change to be a great council, in which all considerable nations have their representatives. Factors in the trading world are what ambassadors are in the politic world: they negotiate affairs, conclude treaties, and maintain a good correspondence between those wealthy societies of men that are divided from one another by seas and oceans, or live on the different extremities of a continent. I have often been pleased to hear disputes adjusted between an inhabitant of Japan and an alderman of London, or to see a subject of the Great Mogul entering into a league with one of the Czar of Muscovy. I am infinitely delighted in mixing with these several ministers of commerce, as they are distinguished by their different walks and different languages. Sometimes I am jostled among a body of Armenians; sometimes I am lost in a crowd of Jews; and sometimes make one in a group of Dutchmen. I am a Dane, Swede, or Frenchman, at different times; or rather fancy myself like the old philosopher, who, upon being asked what countryman he was, replied that he was a citizen of the world.

Though I very frequently visit this busy multitude of people, I am known to nobody there but my friend Sir Andrew, who often smiles upon me as he sees me bustling in the crowd, but at the same time connives at my presence without taking any further notice of me. There is indeed a merchant of Egypt who just knows me by sight, having formerly remitted me some money to Grand Cairo; but as I am not versed in the modern Coptic, our conferences go no further than a bow and a grimace.

This grand scene of business gives me an infinite variety of solid and substantial entertainments. As I am a great lover of mankind, my heart naturally overflows with pleasure at the sight of a prosperous and happy multitude, insomuch that at many public solemnities I cannot forbear expressing my joy with tears that have stolen down my cheeks. For this reason I am wonderfully delighted to see such a body of men thriving in their own private fortunes, and at the same time promoting the public stock; or, in other words, raising estates for their own families, by bringing into their own country whatever is wanting, and carrying out of it whatever is superfluous.

Nature seems to have taken a particular care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, with an eye to this mutual intercourse and traffic among mankind, that the natives of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest. Almost every degree produces some-

thing peculiar to it. The food often grows in one country, and the sauce in another. The fruits of Portugal are corrected by the products of Barbadoes, the infusion of a China plant sweetened with the pith of an Indian cane. The Philippine Islands give a flavor to our European bowls. The single dress of a woman of quality is often the product of an hundred climates. The muff and the fan come together from the different ends of the earth. The scarf is sent from the torrid zone, and the tippet from beneath the pole. The brocade petticoat rises out of the mines of Peru, and the diamond necklace out of the bowels of Indostan.

If we consider our own country in its natural prospect, without any of the benefits and advantages of commerce, what a barren, uncomfortable spot of earth falls to our share! Natural historians tell us, that no fruit grows originally among us, besides hips and haws, acorns and pig-nuts, with other delicacies of the like nature; that our climate of itself, and without the assistances of art, can make no further advances towards a plum than to a sloe, and carries an apple to no greater perfection than a crab; that our melons, our peaches, our figs, our apricots and cherries, are strangers among us, imported in different ages, and naturalized in our English gardens; and that they would all degenerate and fall away into the trash of our own country, if they were wholly neglected by the planter, and left to the mercy of our sun and soil. Nor has traffic more enriched our vegetable world, than it has improved the whole face of nature among us. Our ships are laden

with the harvest of every climate ; our tables are stored with spices, and oils, and wines ; our rooms are filled with pyramids of china, and adorned with the workmanship of Japan ; our morning's draught comes to us from the remotest corners of the earth ; we repair our bodies by the drugs of America, and repose ourselves under Indian canopies. My friend Sir Andrew calls the vineyards of France our gardens ; the Spice Islands, our hot-beds ; the Persians, our silk-weavers ; and the Chinese, our potters. Nature indeed furnishes us with the bare necessaries of life ; but traffic gives us a great variety of what is useful, and at the same time supplies us with every thing that is convenient and ornamental. Nor is it the least part of this our happiness, that, whilst we enjoy the remotest products of the North and South, we are free from those extremities of weather which give them birth ; that our eyes are refreshed with the green fields of Britain, at the same time that our palates are feasted with fruits that rise between the tropics.

For these reasons there are not more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the rich, and magnificence to the great. Our English merchant converts the tin of his own country into gold, and exchanges his wool for rubies. The Mahometans are clothed in our British manufacture, and the inhabitants of the frozen zone warmed with the fleeces of our sheep.

When I have been upon the Change, I have often fancied one of our old kings standing in person, where he is represented in effigy,[1] and looking down upon the wealthy concourse of people with which that place is every day filled. In this case, how would he be surprised to hear all the languages of Europe spoken in this little spot of his former dominions, and to see so many private men, who in his time would have been the vassals of some powerful baron, negotiating like princes for greater sums of money than were formerly to be met with in the royal treasury! Trade, without enlarging the British territories, has given us a sort of additional empire; it has multiplied the number of the rich, made our landed estates infinitely more valuable than they were formerly, and added to them the accession of other estates as valuable as the lands themselves. — *Spectator, No. 69.*

15. WILL HONEYCOMB, THE MAN ABOUT TOWN.

My friend Will Honeycomb values himself very much upon what he calls the knowledge of mankind, which has cost him many disasters in his youth; for Will reckons every misfortune that he has met with among the women, and every rencounter among the men, as parts of his education, and fancies he should never have been the man he is, had he not broke windows, knocked down constables, disturbed honest people with his midnight serenades, and beat up

[1] The statues of the English kings stood in niches on the old Exchange Building.

Phryne's quarters, when he was a young fellow. The engaging in adventures of this nature, Will calls the studying of mankind, and terms this knowledge of the town, the knowledge of the world. Will ingenuously confesses, that for half his life his head ached every morning with reading of men over night; and at present comforts himself under sundry infirmities with the reflection that without them he could not have been acquainted with the gallantries of the age. This Will looks upon as the learning of a gentleman, and regards all other kinds of science as the accomplishments of one whom he calls a scholar, a bookish man, or a philosopher.

For these reasons Will shines in a mixed company, where he has the discretion not to go out of his depth, and has often a certain way of making his real ignorance appear a seeming one. Our club, however, has frequently caught him tripping, at which times they never spare him. For as Will often insults us with the knowledge of the town, we sometimes take our revenge upon him by our knowledge of books.

He was last week producing two or three letters which he writ in his youth to a coquette lady. The raillery of them was natural, and well enough for a mere man of the town; but very unluckily, several of the words were wrong spelt. Will laughed this off at first as well as he could; but finding himself pushed on all sides, and especially by the Templar, he told us with a little passion that he never liked pedantry in spelling, and that he spelt like a gentleman and not

like a scholar: upon this Will had recourse to his old topic of showing the narrow-spiritedness, the pride and ignorance, of pedants; which he carried so far, that, upon my retiring to my lodgings, I could not forbear throwing together such reflections as occurred to me upon that subject.

A man who has been brought up among books, and is able to talk of nothing else, is a very indifferent companion, and what we call a pedant. But, methinks, we should enlarge the title, and give it to every one that does not know how to think out of his profession and particular way of life.

What is a greater pedant than a mere man of the town? Bar him the play-houses, a catalogue of the reigning beauties, and an account of a few fashionable distemper sthat have befallen him, and you strike him dumb. How many a pretty gentleman's knowledge lies all within the verge of the court! He will tell you the names of the principal favorites, repeat the shrewd sayings of a man of quality, whisper an intrigue that is not yet blown upon by common fame; or, if the sphere of his observation is a little larger than ordinary, will perhaps enter into all the incidents, turns, and revolutions in a game of ombre. When he has gone thus far, he has shown you the whole circle of his accomplishments, his parts are drained, and he is disabled from any further conversation. What are these but rank pedants? and yet these are the men who value themselves most on their exemption from the pedantry of colleges.

I might here mention the military pedant, who always talks in a camp, and is storming towns, making lodgements, and fighting battles from one end of the year to the other. Every thing he speaks smells of gunpowder: if you take away his artillery from him, he has not a word to say for himself. I might likewise mention the law pedant, that is perpetually putting cases, repeating the transactions of Westminster Hall, wrangling with you upon the most indifferent circumstances of life, and not to be convinced of the distance of a place, or of the most trivial point in conversation, but by dint of argument. The state pedant is wrapped up in news, and lost in politics. If you mention either of the kings of Spain or Poland, he talks very notably; but if you go out of the Gazette, you drop him. In short, a mere courtier, a mere soldier, a mere scholar, a mere any thing, is an insipid pedantic character, and equally ridiculous.

Of all the species of pedants which I have mentioned, the book pedant is much the most supportable: he has at least an exercised understanding, and a head which is full though confused, so that a man who converses with him may often receive from him hints of things that are worth knowing, and what he may possibly turn to his own advantage, though they are of little use to the owner. The worst kind of pedants among learned men are such as are naturally endowed with a very small share of common-sense, and have read a great number of books without taste or distinction.

The truth of it is, learning, like travelling, and all other methods of improvement, as it finishes good sense, so it makes a silly man ten thousand times more insufferable, by supplying variety of matter to his impertinence, and giving him an opportunity of abounding in absurdities.

Shallow pedants cry up one another much more than men of solid and useful learning. To read the titles they give an editor, or collator of a manuscript, you would take him for the glory of the commonwealth of letters, and the wonder of his age; when perhaps upon examination you find that he has only rectified a Greek particle, or laid out a whole sentence in proper commas.

They are obliged indeed to be thus lavish of their praises, that they may keep one another in countenance; and it is no wonder if a great deal of knowledge, which is not capable of making a man wise, has a natural tendency to make him vain and arrogant. —*Spectator, No. 105.*

16. WILL HONEYCOMB MARRIED.

It is very usual for those who have been severe upon marriage, in some part or other of their lives to enter into the fraternity which they have ridiculed, and to see their raillery return upon their own heads. I scarce ever knew a woman-hater that did not sooner or later pay for it. Marriage, which is a blessing to another man, falls upon such a one as a judgment. Mr. Congreve's "Old Bachelor" is set forth to us

with much wit and humor as an example of this kind. In short, those who have most distinguished themselves by railing at the sex in general, very often make an honorable amends by choosing one of the most worthless persons of it for a companion and yokefellow. Hymen takes his revenge in kind, on those who turn his mysteries into ridicule.

My friend Will Honeycomb, who was so unmercifully witty upon the women, in a couple of letters[1] which I lately communicated to the public, has given the ladies ample satisfaction by marrying a farmer's daughter; a piece of news which came to our club by the last post. The Templar is very positive that he has married a dairy-maid; but Will, in his letter to me on this occasion, sets the best face upon the matter that he can, and gives a more tolerable account of his spouse. I must confess I suspected something more than ordinary, when upon opening the letter I found that Will was fallen off from his former gayety, having changed Dear Spec, which was his usual salute at the beginning of the letter, into *My worthy friend*, and subscribed himself at the latter end of it, at full length, William Honeycomb. In short, the gay, the loud, the vain Will Honeycomb, who had made love to every great fortune that has appeared in town for above thirty years together, and boasted of favors from ladies whom he had never seen, is at length wedded to a plain country girl.

His letter gives us the picture of a converted rake.

[1] Spectator, Nos. 409, 511; not included in this volume.

The sober character of the husband is dashed with the man of the town, and enlivened with those little cant phrases which have made my friend Will often thought very pretty company. But let us hear what he says for himself.

MY WORTHY FRIEND.

I question not but you, and the rest of my acquaintance, wonder that I, who have lived in the smoke and gallantries of the town for thirty years together, should all on a sudden grow fond of a country life. Had not my dog of a steward run away as he did, without making up his accounts, I had still been immersed in sin and sea-coal.[1] But since my late forced visit to my estate, I am so pleased with it, that I am resolved to live and die upon it. I am every day abroad among my acres, and can scarce forbear filling my letter with breezes, shades, flowers, meadows, and purling streams. The simplicity of manners which I have heard you so often speak of, and which appears here in perfection, charms me wonderfully. As an instance of it, I must acquaint you, and by your means the whole club, that I have lately married one of my tenants' daughters. She is born of honest parents, and though she has no portion she has a great deal of virtue. The natural sweetness and innocence of her behavior, the freshness of her complexion, the unaffected turn of her shape and person, shot me through and through every time I saw her, and did more execution upon me in grogram than the greatest beauty in town or court had ever done in brocade. In short, she is such a one as promises me a good heir to my estate; and if by her means I cannot leave to my children what are falsely called the gifts of birth, high titles and alliances, I hope to convey to them the more real and valuable gifts of birth, strong bodies and healthy constitutions. As for your fine women, I need not tell thee that I know them. I have had my share in their graces,

[1] Spectator, Nos. 409, 511; not included in this volume.

but no more of that. It shall be my business hereafter to live the life of an honest man, and to act as becomes the master of a family. I question not but I shall draw upon me the raillery of the town, and be treated to the tune of *The Marriage-hater match'd;*[1] but I am prepared for it. I have been as witty upon others in my time. To tell thee truly, I saw such a tribe of fashionable young fluttering coxcombs shot up, that I did not think my post of an *homme de ruelle* any longer tenable. I felt a certain stiffness in my limbs, which entirely destroyed that jauntiness of air I was once master of. Besides, for I may now confess my age to thee, I have been eight and forty above these twelve years. Since my retirement into the country will make a vacancy in the club, I could wish you would fill up my place with my friend Tom Dapperwit. He has an infinite deal of fire, and knows the town. For my own part, as I have said before, I shall endeavor to live hereafter suitable to a man in my station, as a prudent head of a family, a good husband, a careful father (when it shall so happen), and as

Your most sincere friend and humble servant,

WILLIAM HONEYCOMB.

Spectator, No. 530.

17. THE TORY FOX-HUNTER.

FOR the honor of his Majesty, and the safety of his government, we cannot but observe, that those who have appeared the greatest enemies to both are of that rank of men who are commonly distinguished by the title of *Fox-hunters*. As several of these have had no part of their education in cities, camps, or courts, it is doubtful whether they are of greater ornament or use to the nation in which they live. It would be an everlasting reproach to politics, should such men be able

[1] A forgotten comedy, by Thomas Durfey.

to overturn an establishment which has been formed by the wisest laws, and is supported by the ablest heads. The wrong notions and prejudices which cleave to many of these country gentlemen, who have always lived out of the way of being better informed, are not easy to be conceived by a person who has never conversed with them.

That I may give my readers an image of these rural statesmen, I shall, without further preface, set down an account of a discourse I chanced to have with one of them some time ago. I was travelling towards one of the remotest parts of England, when, about three o'clock in the afternoon, seeing a country gentleman trotting before me with a spaniel by his horse's side, I made up to him. Our conversation opened, as usual, upon the weather; in which we were very unanimous, having both agreed that it was too dry for the season of the year. My fellow-traveller, upon this, observed to me, that there had been no good weather since the Revolution.

I was a little startled at so extraordinary a remark, but would not interrupt him until he proceeded to tell me of the fine weather they used to have in King Charles the Second's reign. I only answered that I did not see how the badness of the weather could be the king's fault; and, without waiting for his reply, asked him whose house it was we saw upon a rising ground at a little distance from us. He told me that it belonged to an old fanatical cur, Mr. Such-a-one. "You must have heard of him," says he: "he's one

of the Rump." I knew the gentleman's character upon hearing his name, but assured him that to my knowledge he was a good Churchman. "Ay!" says he, with a kind of surprise. "We were told in the country that he spoke twice in the queen's time against taking off the duties upon French claret."

This naturally led us into the proceedings of late parliaments, upon which occasion he affirmed roundly, that there had not been one good law passed since King William's accession to the throne, except the act for preserving the game. I had a mind to see him out, and therefore did not care for contradicting him. "Is it not hard," says he, "that honest gentlemen should be taken into custody of messengers to prevent them from acting according to their consciences? But," says he, "what can we expect when a parcel of factious sons of"—

He was going on in a great passion, but chanced to miss his dog, who was amusing himself about a bush that grew at some distance behind us. We stood still till he had whistled him up; when he fell into a long panegyric upon his spaniel, who seemed indeed excellent in his kind; but I found the most remarkable adventure of his life was, that he had once like to have worried a dissenting teacher. The master could hardly sit on his horse for laughing all the while he was giving me the particulars of the story, which I found had mightily endeared his dog to him, and, as he himself told me, had made him a great favorite among all the honest gentlemen of the country.

We were at length diverted from this piece of mirth by a post-boy, who winding his horn at us, my companion gave him two or three curses, and left the way clear for him. "I fancy," said I, "that post brings news from Scotland. I shall long to see the next Gazette." — "Sir," says he, "I make it a rule never to believe any of your printed news. We never see, sir, how things go, except now and then in 'Dyer's Letter,' and I read that more for the style than the news. The man has a clever pen, it must be owned. But is it not strange that we should be making war upon Church-of-England men, with Dutch and Swiss soldiers, men of anti-monarchical principles? These foreigners will never be loved in England, sir: they have not that wit and good-breeding that we have."

I must confess I did not expect to hear my new acquaintance value himself upon these qualifications; but finding him such a critic upon foreigners, I asked him if he had ever travelled. He told me, he did not know what travelling was good for, but to teach a man to ride the great horse, to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience. To which he added, that he scarce ever knew a traveller in his life who had not forsook his principles, and lost his hunting-seat. "For my part," says he, "I and my father before me have always been for passive obedience, and shall be always for opposing a prince who makes use of ministers that are of another opinion. — But where do you intend to inn to-night? (for we were now come in sight of the next town.) I can help you to a very good

landlord if you will go along with me. He is a lusty, jolly fellow, that lives well, at least three yards in girth, and the best Church-of-England man upon the road." I had the curiosity to see this High-Church innkeeper, as well as to enjoy more of the conversation of my fellow-traveller, and therefore readily consented to set our horses together for that night. As we rode side by side through the town, I was let into the characters of all the principal inhabitants whom we met in our way. One was a dog, another a whelp, and another a cur, under which several denominations were comprehended all that voted on the Whig side in the last election of burgesses. As for those of his own party, he distinguished them by a nod of his head, and asking them how they did by their Christian names.

Upon our arrival at the inn, my companion fetched out the jolly landlord, who knew him by his whistle. Many endearments and private whispers passed between them; though it was easy to see, by the landlord's scratching his head, that things did not go to their wishes. The landlord had swelled his body to a prodigious size, and worked up his complexion to standing crimson, by his zeal for the prosperity of the Church, which he expressed every hour of the day, as his customers dropped in, by repeated bumpers. He had not time to go to church himself, but, as my friend told me in my ear, had headed a mob at the pulling-down of two or three meeting-houses. While supper was preparing, he enlarged upon the happiness of the neighboring shire; "For," says he, "there is

scarce a Presbyterian in the whole country, except the bishop." In short, I found by his discourse that he had learned a great deal of politics, but not one word of religion, from the parson of his parish; and indeed, that he had scarce any other notion of religion, but that it consisted in hating Presbyterians. I had a remarkable instance of his notions in this particular. Upon seeing a poor decrepit old woman pass under the window where he sat, he desired me to take notice of her; and afterwards informed me, that she was generally reputed a witch by the country people, but that, for his part, he was apt to believe she was a Presbyterian.

Supper was no sooner served in, than he took occasion, from a shoulder of mutton that lay before us, to cry up the plenty of England, which would be the happiest country in the world, provided we would live within ourselves. Upon which, he expatiated on the inconveniences of trade, that carried from us the commodities of our country, and made a parcel of upstarts as rich as men of the most ancient families of England. He then declared frankly that he had always been against all treaties and alliances with foreigners. "Our wooden walls," says he, "are our security, and we may bid defiance to the whole world, especially if they should attack us when the militia is out." I ventured to reply, that I had as great an opinion of the English fleet as he had; but I could not see how they could be paid, and manned, and fitted out, unless we encouraged trade and navigation. He replied with some vehemence, "That he would undertake to prove

trade would be the ruin of the English nation." I would fain have put him upon it; but he contented himself with affirming it more eagerly, to which he added two or three curses upon the London merchants, not forgetting the directors of the Bank. After supper he asked me if I was an admirer of punch; and immediately called for a sneaker.

I took this occasion to insinuate the advantages of trade, by observing to him, that water was the only native of England that could be made use of on this occasion; but that the lemons, the brandy, the sugar, and the nutmeg were all foreigners. This put him into some confusion; but the landlord, who overheard me, brought him off by affirming, "That for constant use there was no liquor like a cup of English water, provided it had malt enough in it." My squire laughed heartily at the conceit, and made the landlord sit down with us.

We sat pretty late over our punch; and, amidst a great deal of improving discourse, drank the healths of several persons in the country, whom I had never heard of, that, they both assured me, were the ablest statesmen in the nation; and of some Londoners, whom they extolled to the skies for their wit, and who, I knew, passed in town for silly fellows. It being now midnight, and my friend perceiving by his almanac that the moon was up, he called for his horse, and took a sudden resolution to go to his house, which was at three miles distance from the town, after having bethought himself that he never slept well out of his

own bed. He shook me very heartily by the hand at parting, and discovered a great air of satisfaction in his looks that he had met with an opportunity of showing his parts, and left me a much wiser man than he found me.[1] — *Freeholder, No. 22.*

[1] It will be observed that the charming humor of this paper is used in the service of the Whig party, which was strongest in towns and among the trading class. The Freeholder, unlike the Tatler and Spectator, was freely open to political discussion.

III.

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

[The first mention of Sir Roger de Coverley occurs in "Spectator" No. 2, which gives an account of the several members of the Spectators. This paper seems to have been written by Steele, perhaps with the advice and assistance of Addison. Indeed, it is probable that to Steele we owe the original conception of the character of the old knight, though its development was the work of Addison's nicer art. The portrait of Sir Roger is given here as a fitting introduction to the papers which follow.]

THE first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behavior; but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humor creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him.

When he is in town he lives in Soho Square. It is said, he keeps himself a bachelor, by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman; had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house, for calling him youngster. But, being ill used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humors he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behavior that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company; when he comes into a house, he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way up-stairs to a visit. I must not omit that Sir Roger is a justice of the *quorum;* that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

18. SIR ROGER AT HOME.

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humor, lets me rise and go to bed when I please; dine at his own table or in my chamber, as I think fit; sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance: as I have been walking in his fields, I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons: for, as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and, as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet-de-chambre for his brother; his butler is gray-headed; his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen; and his coachman has the looks of a privy-councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a gray pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness, out of regard to his

past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenance of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages everybody to him, so that, when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humor, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some

learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humorist; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are, as it were, tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common or ordinary colors. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned; and, without staying for my answer, told me that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and if possible a man that understood a little about backgammon. "My friend," says Sir Roger, "found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and, because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was

higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and, though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked any thing of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a lawsuit in the parish since he has lived among them; if any dispute arises, they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity."

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow (for it was Saturday night), told us, the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a

good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and, instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavor after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people. — *Spectator, No. 106.*

19. SIR ROGER AT CHURCH.

I AM always very well pleased with a country Sunday, and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as

it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard as a citizen does upon the Change; the whole parish politics being generally discussed in that place, either after sermon, or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good Churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing; he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion-table at his own expense. He has often told me, that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel, and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a Common Prayer-book; and at the same time employed an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms, upon which they now very much value themselves, and, indeed, outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up, and looks about him, and, if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening

out a verse in the singing-psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces *Amen* three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews, it seems, is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see any thing ridiculous in his behavior; besides that the general good sense and worthiness of his character makes his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side; and every now and then inquires how such a one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church, — which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechising day, when Sir Roger has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a Bible to be given him next day for his encouragement; and sometimes accompanies it with a flitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and, that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church service, has promised, upon the death of the present incumbent (who is very old), to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the squire; and the squire, to be revenged on the parson, never comes to church. The squire has made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers; while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon that he is a better man than his patron. In short, matters are come to such an extremity, that the squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half year; and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people; who

are so used to be dazzled with riches, that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning; and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it. — *Spectator, No. 112.*

20. SIR ROGER AT THE COUNTY ASSIZES.

A MAN'S first care should be to avoid the reproaches of his own heart; his next, to escape the censures of the world. If the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected; but otherwise there cannot be a greater satisfaction to an honest mind, than to see those approbations which it gives itself seconded by the applauses of the public: a man is more sure of his conduct, when the verdict which he passes upon his own behavior is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know him.

My worthy friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at peace within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable tribute for his universal benevolence to mankind, in the returns of affection and good-will which are paid him by every one that lives within his neighborhood. I lately met with two or three odd instances of that general respect which is shown to the good old knight. He would needs carry Will Wimble and myself with him to the county assizes. As we were upon the road, Will Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rode

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before us, and conversed with them for some time; during which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters.

"The first of them," says he, "that has a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about a hundred pounds a year, an honest man: he is just within the Game Act, and qualified to kill a hare or a pheasant; he knocks down a dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week, and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. He would be a good neighbor if he did not destroy so many partridges: in short, he is a very sensible man; shoots flying; and has been several times foreman of the petty jury.

"The other that rides along with him is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for taking the law of everybody. There is not one in the town where he lives that he has not sued at a quarter-sessions. The rogue had once the impudence to go to law with the widow. His head is full of costs, damages, and ejectments; he plagued a couple of honest gentlemen so long for a trespass in breaking one of his hedges, till he was forced to sell the ground it enclosed, to defray the charges of the prosecution. His father left him fourscore pounds a year; but he has cast and been cast so often, that he is not now worth thirty. I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow-tree."

As Sir Roger was giving me this account of Tom Touchy, Will Wimble and his two companions stopped short until we came up to them. After having paid

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their respects to Sir Roger, Will told him that Mr. Touchy and he must appeal to him upon a dispute that arose between them. Will, it seems, had been giving his fellow-traveller an account of his angling one day in such a hole; when Tom Touchy, instead of hearing out his story, told him, that Mr. Such-an-one, if he pleased, might *take the law of him*, for fishing in that part of the river. My friend Sir Roger heard them both upon a round trot; and after having paused some time, told them, with the air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that *much might be said on both sides.* They were neither of them dissatisfied with the knight's determination, because neither of them found himself in the wrong by it; upon which we made the best of our way to the assizes.

The court was set before Sir Roger came; but notwithstanding all the justices had taken their places upon the bench, they made room for the old knight at the head of them; who, for his reputation in the country, took occasion to whisper in the judge's ear, *that he was glad his lordship had met with so much good weather in his circuit.* I was listening to the proceedings of the court with much attention, and infinitely pleased with that great appearance and solemnity which so properly accompanies such a public administration of our laws; when, after about an hour's sitting, I observed to my great surprise, in the midst of a trial, that my friend Sir Roger was getting up to speak. I was in some pain for him till I found

he had acquitted himself of two or three sentences, with a look of much business and great intrepidity.

Upon his first rising the court was hushed, and a general whisper ran among the country people that Sir Roger *was up*. The speech he made was so little to the purpose, that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it; and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and keep up his credit in the country.

I was highly delighted, when the court rose, to see the gentlemen of the country gathering about my old friend, and striving who should compliment him most; at the same time that the ordinary people gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his courage, that was not afraid to speak to the judge.

In our return home we met with a very odd accident; which I cannot forbear relating, because it shows how desirous all who know Sir Roger are of giving him marks of their esteem. When we were arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems, been formerly a servant in the knight's family: and, to do honor to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door; so that "the Knight's Head" had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew any thing of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from

affection and good-will, he only told him that he had made him too high a compliment; and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honor for any man under a duke; but told him at the same time, that it might be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly they got a painter by the knight's directions to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and by a little aggravation of the features to change it into the *Saracen's Head.* I should not have known this story, had not the innkeeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing that his honor's head was brought back last night with the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my friend with his usual cheerfulness related the particulars above mentioned, and ordered the head to be brought into the room. I could not forbear discovering greater expressions of mirth than ordinary upon the appearance of this monstrous face, under which, notwithstanding it was made to frown and stare in a most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant resemblance of my old friend. Sir Roger, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought it possible for people to know him in that disguise. I at first kept my usual silence; but upon the knight conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a Saracen, I composed my countenance in the best manner I could, and replied, *That much might be said on both sides.*

These several adventures, with the knight's behavior in them, gave me as pleasant a day as ever I met with in any of my travels. — *Spectator, No. 122.*

21. SIR ROGER IN TOWN.

I WAS this morning surprised with a great knocking at the door, when my landlady's daughter came up to me, and told me that there was a man below desired to speak with me. Upon my asking her who it was, she told me it was a very grave elderly person, but that she did not know his name. I immediately went down to him, and found him to be the coachman of my worthy friend Sir Roger de Coverley. He told me that his master came to town last night, and would be glad to take a turn with me in Gray's-inn walks. As I was wondering in myself what had brought Sir Roger to town, not having lately received any letter from him, he told me that his master was come up to get a sight of Prince Eugene,[1] and that he desired I would immediately meet him.

I was not a little pleased with the curiosity of the old knight, though I did not much wonder at it, having heard him say more than once, in private discourse, that he looked upon Prince Eugenio (for so the knight always calls him) to be a greater man than Scanderbeg.[2]

[1] Prince Eugene of Savoy, the ablest general among the allies of the English in the great war of the Spanish succession. He came to London in January, 1712, to watch and if possible impede the progress of the negotiations for peace with his enemy Louis XIV. of France.

[2] Scanderbeg was a Greek hero who checked the advance of the Turks in the fifteenth century.

I was no sooner come into Gray's-inn walks, but I heard my friend upon the terrace, hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigor; for he loves to clear his pipes in good air (to make use of his own phrase), and is not a little pleased with any one who takes notice of the strength which he still exerts in his morning hems.

I was touched with a secret joy at the sight of the good old man, who before he saw me was engaged in conversation with a beggar-man that had asked an alms of him. I could hear my friend chide him for not finding out some work; but at the same time saw him put his hand into his pocket, and give him sixpence.

Our salutations were very hearty on both sides, consisting of many kind shakes of the hand, and several affectionate looks which we cast upon one another. After which the knight told me my good friend his chaplain was very well, and much at my service, and that the Sunday before he had made a most incomparable sermon out of Dr. Barrow. "I have left," says he, "all my affairs in his hands, and, being willing to lay an obligation upon him, have deposited with him thirty merks to be distributed among his poor parishioners."

He then proceeded to acquaint me with the welfare of Will Wimble. Upon which he put his hand into his fob, and presented me in his name with a tobacco-stopper; telling me, that Will had been busy all the beginning of the winter in turning great quantities of

them, and that he made a present of one to every gentleman in the country who has good principles, and smokes. He added, that poor Will was at present under great tribulation, for that Tom Touchy had taken the law of him for cutting some hazel sticks out of one of his hedges.

Among other pieces of news which the knight brought from his country-seat, he informed me that Moll White [1] was dead; and that about a month after her death the wind was so very high, that it blew down the end of one of his barns. "But, for my own part," says Sir Roger, "I do not think that the old woman had any hand in it."

He afterwards fell into an account of the diversions which had passed in his house during the holidays; for Sir Roger, after the laudable custom of his ancestors, always keeps open house at Christmas. I learned from him, that he had killed eight fat hogs for this season; that he had dealt about his chines very liberally amongst his neighbors; and that in particular he had sent a string of hog's-puddings, with a pack of cards, to every poor family in the parish. "I have often thought," says Sir Roger, "it happens very well that Christmas should fall out in the middle of winter. It is the most dead and uncomfortable time of the year, when the poor people would suffer very much from their poverty and cold, if they had not good

[1] A poor old creature who lived near Sir Roger, and was much suspected by the neighbors of being a witch. Her story is told in Spectator, No. 117; not included in this volume.

cheer, warm fires, and Christmas gambols to support them. I love to rejoice their poor hearts at this season, and to see the whole village merry in my great hall. I allow a double quantity of malt to my small beer, and set it a-running for twelve days to every one that calls for it. I have always a piece of cold beef and a mince-pie upon the table, and am wonderfully pleased to see my tenants pass away a whole evening in playing their innocent tricks, and smutting one another. Our friend Will Wimble is as merry as any of them, and shows a thousand roguish tricks upon these occasions."

I was very much delighted with the reflection of my old friend, which carried so much goodness in it. He then launched out into the praise of the late Act of Parliament for securing the Church of England; and told me, with great satisfaction, that he believed it already began to take effect, for that a rigid dissenter, who chanced to dine at his house on Christmas Day, had been observed to eat very plentifully of his plum-porridge.

After having despatched all our country matters, Sir Roger made several inquiries concerning the club, and particularly of his old antagonist Sir Andrew Freeport. He asked me, with a kind of smile, whether Sir Andrew had not taken the advantage of his absence to vent among them some of his republican doctrines; but soon after, gathering up his countenance into a more than ordinary seriousness, "Tell me truly," said he, "don't you think Sir Andrew had a hand in the Pope's

procession?"[1] but without giving me time to answer him, "Well, well," says he, "I know you are a wary man, and do not care for talking of public matters."

The knight then asked me if I had seen Prince Eugenio, and made me promise to get him a stand in some convenient place where he might have a full sight of that extraordinary man, whose presence does so much honor to the British nation. He dwelt very long on the praises of this great general, and I found that, since I was with him in the country, he had drawn many observations together out of his reading in Baker's Chronicle, and other authors, who always lie in his hall window, which very much redound to the honor of this prince.

Having passed away the greatest part of the morning in hearing the knight's reflections, which were partly private and partly political, he asked me if I would smoke a pipe with him over a dish of coffee at Squire's. As I love the old man, I take delight in complying with every thing that is agreeable to him, and accordingly waited on him to the coffee-house, where his venerable aspect drew upon us the eyes of the whole room. He had no sooner seated himself at the upper end of the high table, but he called for a clean pipe, a paper of tobacco, a dish of coffee, a

[1] The Pope's procession was an annual Protestant demonstration held for many years on Nov. 17, the anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth; so called because images of the Pope were often carried in the procession, and afterward burnt in effigy. The Duke of Marlborough came home from his campaign of 1711 in November, and the more zealous Whigs proposed to turn the usual demonstration of Nov. 17 into a magnificent reception of the Duke; but the Tory government got wind of the preparations, and forbade them.

wax-candle, and the Supplement, with such an air of cheerfulness and good-humor, that all the boys in the coffee-room (who seemed to take pleasure in serving him) were at once employed on his several errands, insomuch that nobody else could come at a dish of tea till the knight had got all his conveniences about him. — *Spectator, No. 269.*

22. SIR ROGER VISITS WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me t'other night, that he had been reading my paper upon Westminster Abbey,[1] in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies. He told me at the same time, that he observed I had promised another paper upon the tombs, and that he should be glad to go and see them with me, not having visited them since he had read history. I could not at first imagine how this came into the knight's head, till I recollected that he had been very busy all last summer upon Baker's Chronicle, which he has quoted several times in his disputes with Sir Andrew Freeport since his last coming to town. Accordingly I promised to call upon him the next morning, that we might go together to the Abbey.

I found the knight under his butler's hand, who always shaves him. He was no sooner dressed than he called for a glass of the widow Trueby's water, which he told me he always drank before he went abroad. He recommended to me a dram of it at the

[1] Spectator, No. 26. See p. 146 of this volume.

same time, with so much heartiness, that I could not forbear drinking it. As soon as I had got it down, I found it very unpalatable; upon which the knight, observing that I had made several wry faces, told me that he knew I should not like it at first, but that it was the best thing in the world against the stone or gravel.

I could have wished, indeed, that he had acquainted me with the virtues of it sooner; but it was too late to complain, and I knew what he had done was out of good-will. Sir Roger told me further, that he looked upon it to be very good for a man whilst he stayed in town, to keep off infection, and that he got together a quantity of it upon the first news of the sickness being at Dantzic; when of a sudden, turning short to one of his servants who stood behind him, he bid him call a hackney-coach, and take care it was an elderly man that drove it.

He then resumed his discourse upon Mrs. Trueby's water, telling me that the widow Trueby was one who did more good than all the doctors and apothecaries in the country; that she distilled every poppy that grew within five miles of her; that she distributed her water gratis among all sorts of people: to which the knight added, that she had a very great jointure, and that the whole country would fain have it a match between him and her; "And truly," says Sir Roger, "if I had not been engaged, perhaps I could not have done better."

His discourse was broken off by his man's telling

him he had called a coach. Upon our going to it, after having cast his eye upon the wheels, he asked the coachman if his axletree was good; upon the fellow's telling him he would warrant it, the knight turned to me, told me he looked like an honest man, and went in without further ceremony.

We had not gone far, when Sir Roger, popping out his head, called the coachman down from his box, and, upon his presenting himself at the window, asked him if he smoked. As I was considering what this would end in, he bid him stop by the way at any good tobacconist's, and take in a roll of their best Virginia. Nothing material happened in the remaining part of our journey, till we were set down at the west end of the Abbey.

As we went up the body of the church, the knight pointed at the trophies upon one of the new monuments, and cried out, "A brave man, I warrant him!" Passing afterwards by Sir Cloudsley Shovel, he flung his hand that way, and cried, "Sir Cloudsley Shovel, a very gallant man!" As we stood before Busby's[1] tomb, the knight uttered himself again after the same manner: "Dr. Busby, a great man! he whipped my grandfather. A very great man! I should have gone to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead. A very great man!"

We were immediately conducted into the little

[1] Remembered by thousands of men in the seventeenth century as a very vigorous schoolmaster. He was head master of Westminster School from 1460 to 1695.

chapel on the right hand. Sir Roger, planting himself at our historian's elbow, was very attentive to every thing he said, particularly to the account he gave us of the lord who cut off the king of Morocco's head. Among several other figures, he was very well pleased to see the statesman Cecil upon his knees; and, concluding them all to be great men, was conducted to the figure which represents that martyr to good housewifery, who died by the prick of a needle. Upon our interpreter's telling us that she was a maid of honor to Queen Elizabeth, the knight was very inquisitive into her name and family; and, after having regarded her finger for some time, "I wonder," says he, "that Sir Richard Baker has said nothing of her in his Chronicle."

We were then conveyed to the two coronation chairs, where my old friend, after having heard that the stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from Scotland, was called Jacob's Pillar, set himself down in the chair; and, looking like the figure of an old Gothic king, asked our interpreter what authority they had to say that Jacob had ever been in Scotland. The fellow, instead of returning him an answer, told him that he hoped his honor would pay his forfeit. I could observe Sir Roger a little ruffled upon being thus trepanned; but, our guide not insisting upon his demand, the knight soon recovered his good humor, and whispered in my ear, that if Will Wimble were with us, and saw those two chairs, it would go hard but he would get a tobacco-stopper out of one or t'other of them.

Sir Roger, in the next place, laid his hand upon Edward the Third's sword, and, leaning upon the pommel of it, gave us the whole history of the Black Prince; concluding, that, in Sir Richard Baker's opinion, Edward the Third was one of the greatest princes that ever sat upon the English throne.

We were then shown Edward the Confessor's tomb, upon which Sir Roger acquainted us, that he was the first who touched for the evil; and afterwards Henry the Fourth's, upon which he shook his head, and told us there was fine reading in the casualties of that reign.

Our conductor then pointed to that monument where there is the figure of one of our English kings[1] without a head; and upon giving us to know that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since, "Some Whig, I'll warrant you," says Sir Roger. "You ought to lock up your kings better; they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care."

The glorious names of Henry the Fifth and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining, and of doing justice to Sir Richard Baker, who, as our knight observed with some surprise, had a great many kings in him, whose monuments he had not seen in the Abbey.

For my own part, I could not but be pleased to see the knight show such an honest passion for the glory of his country, and such a respectful gratitude to the memory of its princes.

[1] The statue of Henry V.; but the head was stolen at the time of the Reformation.

I must not omit, that the benevolence of my good old friend, which flows out towards every one he converses with, made him very kind to our interpreter, whom he looked upon as an extraordinary man; for which reason he shook him by the hand at parting, telling him that he should be very glad to see him at his lodgings in Norfolk Buildings, and talk over these matters with him more at leisure. — *Spectator, No. 329.*

23. SIR ROGER GOES TO THE PLAY.

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy with me; assuring me, at the same time, that he had not been at a play these twenty years. "The last I saw," said Sir Roger, "was 'The Committee,' which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church-of-England comedy." He then proceeded to inquire of me who this "Distressed Mother"[1] was; and upon hearing that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a schoolboy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks[2] should be abroad. "I assure you," says he, "I thought I had

[1] A play by Ambrose Philips, founded on Racine's Andromaque.

[2] A company of young rascals who amused themselves of nights by beating belated passers, making them dance, heading them up in barrels and rolling them down hill, and other diversions of that character. They seem to have been particularly troublesome during the winter of 1711–12.

fallen into their hands last night; for I observed two or three lusty black men that followed me half way up Fleet Street, and mended their pace behind me in proportion as I put on to get away from them. You must know," continued the knight, with a smile, "I fancied they had a mind to *hunt* me; for I remember an honest gentleman in my neighborhood, who was served such a trick in King Charles II.'s time, for which reason he has not ventured himself in town ever since. I might have shown them very good sport, had this been their design; for, as I am an old fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodged, and have played them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their lives before." Sir Roger added, that, if these gentlemen had any such intention, they did not succeed very well in it; "for I threw them out," says he, "at the end of Norfolk Street, where I doubled the corner, and got shelter in my lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me. However," says the knight, "if Captain Sentry will make one with us to-morrow night, and if you will both of you call upon me about four o'clock, that we may be at the house before it is full, I will have my own coach in readiness to attend you; for John tells me he has got the fore-wheels mended."

The Captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed hour, bid Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same sword which he made use of at the battle of Steenkirk. Sir Roger's servants, and among the rest my old friend the butler, had, I

found, provided themselves with good oaken plants to attend their master upon this occasion. When we had placed him in his coach, with myself at his left hand, the Captain before him, and his butler at the head of his footmen in the rear, we convoyed him in safety to the playhouse, where, after having marched up the entry in good order, the Captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit. As soon as the house was full, and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up and looked about him with that pleasure which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself, at the sight of a multitude of people who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy myself, as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit, that he made a very proper centre to a tragic audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me that he did not believe the King of France himself had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism; and was well pleased to hear him, at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for Andromache, and a little while after as much for Hermione; and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus.

When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to

which he added with a more than ordinary vehemence, "You can't imagine, sir, what it is to have to do with a widow." [1] Upon Pyrrhus his threatening afterwards to leave her, the knight shook his head, and muttered to himself, "Ay, do if you can." This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination, that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered in my ear, "These widows, sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray," says he, "you that are a critic, is this play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of."

The fourth act, very unluckily, began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer. "Well," says the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, "I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost." He then renewed his attention, and from time to time fell a-praising the widow. He made indeed a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom at his first entering he took for Astyanax; but he quickly set himself right in that particular, though at the same time he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, "who," said he, "must needs be a very fine child, by the account that is given of him." Upon Hermione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audi-

[1] On this point, however, Sir Roger was mistaken: Mr. Spectator *did* know how that was himself. At this time he had been paying diligent court for some two years to that great lady, the dowager Countess of Warwick — and with varying hopes.

ence gave a loud clap; to which Sir Roger added, "On my word, a notable young baggage!"

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of these intervals between the acts, to express their opinion of the players and of their respective parts. Sir Roger, hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man. As they were afterwards applauding Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in a second time: "And let me tell you," says he, "though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them." Captain Sentry seeing two or three wags who sat near us, lean with an attentive ear towards Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should smoke [1] the knight, plucked him by the elbow, and whispered something in his ear that lasted till the opening of the fifth act. The knight was wonderfully attentive to the account which Orestes gives of Pyrrhus his death, and at the conclusion of it told me, it was such a bloody piece of work, that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing afterwards Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinary serious, and took occasion to moralize (in his way) upon an evil conscience; adding that Orestes, in his madness, looked as if he saw something.

As we were the first that came into the house, so

[1] Smoke = detect, find out; a very common slang word in Queen Anne English.

we were the last that went out of it; being resolved to have a clear passage for our old friend, whom we did not care to venture among the jostling of the crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his entertainment, and we guarded him to his lodgings in the same manner that we brought him to the playhouse; being highly pleased, for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the good old man. — *Spectator, No. 335.*

24. THE DEATH OF SIR ROGER.

We last night received a piece of ill news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley *is dead.* He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks' sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he succeeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a Whig justice of peace, who was always Sir Roger's enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and Captain Sentry which mention nothing of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honor of the good old man. I have likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's

house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter, without any alteration or diminution.

"*Honored Sir*, — Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county-sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman, and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighboring gentleman; for you know, sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom; and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed, we were once in great hope of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life; but this only proved a lightning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother; he has bequeathed the fine white gelding, that he used to ride a-hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him; and has left you all his books. He has, moreover, bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning, to every man in the parish, a great frieze coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown gray-headed in our dear master's

service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge: and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church; for he was heard to say some time ago, that if he lived two years longer Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells everybody that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the *quorum;* the whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits, the men in frieze, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the hall-house, and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he shook him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make a good use of it, and to pay the several legacies, and the gifts of charity which he told him he had left as quit-rents upon the estate. The Captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of those whom my master loved, and shows great kindnesses to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never joyed himself since; no more has any of us. 'Twas the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This is all from,

"Honored sir, your most sorrowful servant,

"EDWARD BISCUIT.

"P.S. My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book which comes up to you by the carrier should be given to Sir Andrew Freeport, in his name."

This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler's manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew, opening the book, found it to be a collection of Acts of Parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger's own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points which he had disputed with Sir Roger the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man's handwriting burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain Sentry informs me that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club. — *Spectator, No. 530.*

IV.

LITERARY AND CRITICAL TOPICS.

25. NED SOFTLY THE POET.

I YESTERDAY came hither about two hours before the company generally make their appearance, with a design to read over all the newspapers; but upon my sitting down I was accosted by Ned Softly, who saw me from a corner in the other end of the room, where I found he had been writing something.

"Mr. Bickerstaff," says he, "I observe, by a late paper of yours, that you and I are just of a humor; for you must know, of all impertinences, there is nothing which I so much hate as news. I never read a gazette in my life, and never trouble my head about our armies, whether they win or lose, or in what part of the world they lie encamped." Without giving me time to reply, he drew a paper of verses out of his pocket, telling me that he had something which would entertain me more agreeably, and that he would desire my judgment upon every line; for that we had time enough before us until the company came in.

Ned Softly is a very pretty poet, and a great admirer of easy lines. Waller is his favorite; and as that ad-

mirable writer has the best and worst verses of any among our great English poets, Ned Softly has got all the bad ones without book, which he repeats upon occasion, to show his reading and garnish his conversation. Ned is indeed a true English reader, incapable of relishing the great and masterly strokes of this art, but wonderfully pleased with the little Gothic ornaments of epigrammatical conceits, turns, points, and quibbles, which are so frequent in the most admired of our English poets, and practised by those who want genius and strength to represent, after the manner of the ancients, simplicity in its natural beauty and perfection.

Finding myself unavoidably engaged in such a conversation, I was resolved to turn my pain into a pleasure, and to divert myself, as well as I could, with so very odd a fellow.

"You must understand," says Ned, "that the sonnet I am going to read to you was written upon a lady who showed me some verses of her own making, and is, perhaps, the best poet of our age. But you shall hear it!" Upon which he began to read as follows: —

TO MIRA, ON HER INCOMPARABLE POEMS.

I.

When dress'd in laurel wreaths you shine,
And tune your soft, melodious notes,
You seem a sister of the Nine,
Or Phœbus' self in petticoats.

II.

I fancy, when your song you sing
(Your song you sing with so much art),
Your pen was pluck'd from Cupid's wing;
For, ah! it wounds me like his dart.

"Why," says I, "this is a little nosegay of conceits; a very lump of salt: every verse hath something in it that figures; and then the 'dart,' in the last line, is certainly as pretty a sting in the tail of an epigram (for so I think your critics call it), as ever entered into the thought of a poet."

"Dear Mr. Bickerstaff," says he, shaking me by the hand, "everybody knows you to be a judge of these things; and, to tell you truly, I read over Roscommon's translation of Horace's 'Art of Poetry' three several times, before I sat down to write the sonnet which I have shown you. But you shall hear it again; and pray observe every line of it, for not one of them shall pass without your approbation.

'When dress'd in laurel wreaths you shine.'

This is," says he, "when you have your garland on; when you are writing verses." To which I replied, "I know your meaning; a metaphor."—"The same," said he; and went on, —

'And tune your soft, melodious notes.'

Pray observe the gliding of that verse; there is scarce a consonant in it. I took care to make it run upon

liquids. Give me your opinion of it." — "Truly," said I, "I think it is as good as the former." — "I am very glad to hear you say so," says he. "But mind the next: —

'You seem a sister of the Nine.'

That is," says he, "you seem a sister of the Muses: for, if you look into ancient authors, you will find it was their opinion that there were nine of them." — "I remember it very well," said I; "but pray proceed."

'Or Phœbus' self in petticoats.'

Phœbus," says he, "was the god of poetry. These little instances, Mr. Bickerstaff, show a gentleman's reading. Then to take off from the air of learning which Phœbus and the Muses have given to this first stanza, you may observe how it falls, all of a sudden, into the familiar, — 'in petticoats!'

'Or Phœbus' self in petticoats.'"

"Let us now," says I, "enter upon the second stanza. I find the first line is still a continuation of the metaphor: —

'I fancy, when your song you sing.'"

"It is very right," says he; "but pray observe the turn of words in those two lines. I was a whole hour in adjusting of them, and have still a doubt upon me whether, in the second line, it should be 'Your song

you sing,' or, 'You sing your song.' You shall hear them both: —

> 'I fancy, when your song you sing
> (Your song you sing with so much art),

or,

> 'I fancy, when your song you sing
> (You sing your song with so much art).'"

"Truly," said I, "the turn is so natural, either way, that you have made me almost giddy with it." — "Dear sir," said he, grasping me by the hand, "you have a great deal of patience. But pray what do you think of the next verse?

> 'Your pen was pluck'd from Cupid's wing.'"

"Think!" says I, "I think you have made Cupid look like a little goose." — "That was my meaning," says he; "I think the ridicule is well enough hit off. But we come now to the last, which sums up the whole matter: —

> 'For, ah! it wounds me like his dart.'

Pray how do you like that ah? doth it not make a pretty figure in that place? Ah! it looks as if I felt the dart, and cried out at being pricked with it.

> 'For, ah! it wounds me like his dart.'

"My friend Dick Easy," continued he, "assured me he would rather have written that 'ah!' than to have been the author of the Æneid. He indeed

objected, that I made Mira's pen like a quill in one of the lines, and like a dart in the other. But as to that" —

"Oh, as to that," says I, "it is but supposing Cupid to be like a porcupine, and his quills and darts will be the same thing." He was going to embrace me for the hint; but half a dozen critics coming into the room, whose faces he did not like, he conveyed the sonnet into his pocket, and whispered me in the ear, he would show it me again as soon as his man had written it over fair. — *Tatler, No. 163.*

26. FRENCH INVASION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

I HAVE often wished, that, as in our constitution there are several persons whose business it is to watch over our laws, our liberties, and commerce, certain men might be set apart as superintendents of our language, to hinder any words of a foreign coin from passing among us; and in particular to prohibit any French phrases from being current in this kingdom, when those of our own stamp are altogether as valuable. The present war has so adulterated our tongue with strange words, that it would be impossible for one of our great-grandfathers to know what his posterity have been doing, were he to read their exploits in a modern newspaper. Our warriors are very industrious in propagating the French language, at the same time that they are so gloriously successful in beating down their power. Our soldiers are men of strong heads for action, and perform such feats as they are not able

to express. They want words in their own tongue to tell us what it is they achieve, and therefore send us over accounts of their performances in a jargon of phrases, which they learn among their conquered enemies. They ought, however, to be provided with secretaries, and assisted by our foreign ministers, to tell their story for them in plain English, and to let us know in our mother-tongue what it is our brave countrymen are about. The French would indeed be in the right to publish the news of the present war in English phrases, and make their campaigns unintelligible. Their people might flatter themselves that things are not so bad as they really are, were they thus palliated with foreign terms, and thrown into shades and obscurity. But the English cannot be too clear in their narrative of those actions, which have raised their country to a higher pitch of glory than it ever yet arrived at, and which will be still the more admired the better they are explained.

For my part, by that time a siege is carried on two or three days, I am altogether lost and bewildered in it, and meet with so many inexplicable difficulties, that I scarce know what side has the better of it, till I am informed by the Tower guns that the place is surrendered. I do indeed make some allowance for this part of the war, fortifications having been foreign inventions, and upon that account abounding in foreign terms. But when we have won battles, which may be described in our own language, why are our papers filled with so many unintelligible exploits, and the

French obliged to lend us a part of their tongue before we can know how they are conquered? They must be made accessary to their own disgrace, as the Britons were formerly so artificially wrought in the curtain of the Roman theatre, that they seemed to draw it up, in order to give the spectators an opportunity of seeing their own defeat celebrated upon the stage; for so Mr. Dryden has translated that verse in Virgil: —

> "Purpurea intexti tollunt aulæa Britanni."
>
> GEORG. iii. 25.

> "Which interwoven Britons seem to raise,
> And show the triumph that their shame displays."

The histories of all our former wars are transmitted to us in our vernacular idiom, to use the phrase of a great modern critic.[1] I do not find in any of our chronicles, that Edward III. ever *reconnoitred* the enemy, though he often discovered the posture of the French, and as often vanquished them in battle. The Black Prince passed many a river without the help of *pontoons*, and filled a ditch with fagots as successfully as the generals of our times do it with *fascines*. Our commanders lose half their praise, and our people half their joy, by means of those hard words and dark expressions in which our newspapers do so much abound. I have seen many a prudent citizen, after having read every article, inquire of his next neighbor what news the mail had brought.

[1] Bentley.

I remember, in that remarkable year, when our country was delivered from her greatest fears and apprehensions, and raised to the greatest height of gladness it had ever felt since it was a nation, — I mean the year of Blenheim, — I had the copy of a letter sent me out of the country, which was written from a young gentleman in the army to his father, a man of a good estate and plain sense. As the letter was very modishly checkered with this modern military eloquence, I shall present my reader with a copy of it.

"*Sir*, — Upon the junction of the French and Bavarian armies, they took post behind a great morass, which they thought impracticable. Our general the next day sent a party of horse to reconnoitre them from a little hauteur, at about a quarter of an hour's distance from the army, who returned again to the camp unobserved through several defiles, in one of which they met with a party of French that had been marauding, and made them all prisoners at discretion. The day after, a drum arrived at our camp, with a message which he would communicate to none but the general: he was followed by a trumpet, who they say behaved himself very saucily, with a message from the Duke of Bavaria. The next morning our army, being divided into two corps, made a movement towards the enemy. You will hear in the public prints how we treated them, with the other circumstances of that glorious day. I had the good fortune to be in that regiment that pushed the *Gens d'Armes*. Several French battalions, who some say were a corps de réserve, made a show of resistance; but it only proved a gasconade, for upon our preparing to fill up a little fosse, in order to attack them, they beat the chamade, and sent us *charte blanche*. Their commandant, with a great many other general officers, and troops without number, are made prisoners of war, and will, I believe, give you a visit in England, the

cartel not being yet settled. Not questioning but those particulars will be very welcome to you, I congratulate you upon them, and am your most dutiful son," etc.

The father of the young gentleman, upon the perusal of the letter, found it contained great news, but could not guess what it was. He immediately communicated it to the curate of the parish, who upon the reading of it, being vexed to see any thing he could not understand, fell into a kind of a passion, and told him that his son had sent him a letter that was neither fish, flesh, nor good red-herring. "I wish," says he, "the captain may be *compos mentis:* he talks of a saucy trumpet, and a drum that carries messages; then who is this *Charte Blanche?* He must either banter us, or he is out of his senses." The father, who always looked upon the curate as a learned man, began to fret inwardly at his son's usage, and producing a letter which he had written to him about three posts before, "You see here," says he, "when he writes for money he knows how to speak intelligibly enough; there's no man in England can express himself clearer, when he wants a new furniture for his horse." In short, the old man was so puzzled upon the point, that it might have fared ill with his son, had he not seen all the prints about three days after filled with the same terms of art, and that Charles only wrote like other men. — *Spectator, No. 165.*

27. ON TASTE.

GRATIAN very often recommends *the fine taste* as the utmost perfection of an accomplished man. As this

word arises very often in conversation, I shall endeavor to give some account of it, and to lay down rules how we may know whether we are possessed of it, and how we may acquire that fine taste of writing which is so much talked of among the polite world.

Most languages make use of this metaphor to express that faculty of the mind which distinguishes all the most concealed faults and nicest perfections in writing. We may be sure this metaphor would not have been so general in all tongues, had there not been a very great conformity between that mental taste which is the subject of this paper, and that sensitive taste which gives us a relish for every different flavor that affects the palate. Accordingly we find there are as many degrees of refinement in the intellectual faculty, as in the sense which is marked out by this common denomination.

I knew a person who possessed the one in so great a perfection, that, after having tasted ten different kinds of tea, he would distinguish, without seeing the color of it, the particular sort which was offered him; and not only so, but any two sorts of them that were mixed together in an equal proportion; nay, he has carried the experiment so far, as, upon tasting the composition of three different sorts, to name the parcels from whence the three several ingredients were taken. A man of a fine taste in writing will discern after the same manner, not only the general beauties and imperfections of an author, but discover the several ways of thinking and expressing himself which diversify him

from all other authors, with the several foreign infusions of thought and language, and the particular authors from whom they were borrowed.

After having thus far explained what is generally meant by a fine taste in writing, and shown the propriety of the metaphor which is used on this occasion, I think I may define it to be, *that faculty of the soul, which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike.* If a man would know whether he is possessed of this faculty, I would have him read over the celebrated works of antiquity, which have stood the test of so many different ages and countries, or those works among the moderns which have the sanction of the politer part of our contemporaries. If, upon the perusal of such writings, he does not find himself delighted in an extraordinary manner, or if, upon reading the admired passages in such authors, he finds a coldness and indifference in his thoughts, he ought to conclude, not (as is too usual among tasteless readers) that the author wants those perfections which have been admired in him, but that he himself wants the faculty of discovering them.

He should, in the second place, be very careful to observe whether he tastes the distinguishing perfections, or, if I may be allowed to call them so, the specific qualities, of the author whom he peruses; whether he is particularly pleased with Livy for his manner of telling a story; with Sallust, for his entering into those internal principles of action which arise

from the characters and manners of the persons he describes; or with Tacitus, for his displaying those outward motives of safety and interest, which give birth to the whole series of transactions which he relates.

He may likewise consider how differently he is affected by the same thought which presents itself in a great writer, from what he is when he finds it delivered by a person of an ordinary genius. For there is as much difference in apprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language, and that of a common author, as in seeing an object by the light of a taper, or by the light of the sun.

It is very difficult to lay down rules for the acquirement of such a taste as that I am here speaking of. The faculty must in some degree be born with us, and it very often happens that those who have other qualities in perfection are wholly void of this. One of the most eminent mathematicians of the age has assured me, that the greatest pleasure he took in reading Virgil was in examining Æneas's voyage by the map; as I question not but many a modern compiler of history would be delighted with little more in that divine author, than in the bare matters of fact.

But notwithstanding this faculty must in some measure be born with us, there are several methods for cultivating and improving it, and without which it will be very uncertain, and of very little use to the person that possesses it. The most natural method for this purpose is to be conversant among the writings

of the most polite authors. A man who has any relish for fine writing either discovers new beauties, or receives stronger impressions from the masterly strokes of a great author every time he peruses him; besides that he naturally wears himself into the same manner of speaking and thinking.

Conversation with men of a polite genius is another method for improving our natural taste. It is impossible for a man of the greatest parts to consider any thing in its whole extent, and in all its variety of lights. Every man, besides those general observations which are to be made upon an author, forms several reflections that are peculiar to his own manner of thinking; so that conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections as well as our own. This is the best reason I can give for the observation which several have made, that men of great genius in the same way of writing seldom rise up singly, but at certain periods of time appear together, and in a body, as they did at Rome in the reign of Augustus, and in Greece about the age of Socrates. I cannot think that Corneille, Racine, Molière, Boileau, la Fontaine, Bruyère, Bossu, or the Daciers, would have written so well as they have done, had they not been friends and contemporaries.

It is likewise necessary for a man who would form to himself a finished taste of good writing, to be well versed in the works of the best critics, both ancient and modern. I must confess that I could wish there

were authors of this kind, who, besides the mechanical rules, which a man of very little taste may discourse upon, would enter into the very spirit and soul of fine writing, and show us the several sources of that pleasure which rises in the mind upon the perusal of a noble work. Thus, although in poetry it be absolutely necessary that the unities of time, place, and action, with other points of the same nature, should be thoroughly explained and understood, — there is still something more essential to the art, something that elevates and astonishes the fancy, and gives a greatness of mind to the reader, which few of the critics besides Longinus have considered.

Our general taste in England is for epigram, turns of wit, and forced conceits, which have no manner of influence either for the bettering or enlarging the mind of him who reads them, and have been carefully avoided by the greatest writers both among the ancients and moderns. I have endeavored in several of my speculations to banish this Gothic taste which has taken possession among us. I entertained the town, for a week together, with an essay upon wit; in which I endeavored to detect several of those false kinds which have been admired in the different ages of the world, and at the same time to show wherein the nature of true wit consists. I afterwards gave an instance of the great force which lies in a natural simplicity of thought to affect the mind of the reader, from such vulgar pieces as have little else besides this single qualification to recommend them. I have like-

wise examined the works of the greatest poet which our nation, or, perhaps any other, has produced; and particularized most of those rational and manly beauties which give a value to that divine work. I shall next Saturday enter upon an essay *on the pleasures of imagination*, which, though it shall consider that subject at large, will perhaps suggest to the reader what it is that gives a beauty to many passages of the finest writers both in prose and verse. As an undertaking of this nature is entirely new, I question not but it will be received with candor. — *Spectator, No. 409.*

28. ON METHOD IN DISCUSSION.

AMONG my daily papers which I bestow on the public, there are some which are written with regularity and method, and others that run out into the wildness of those compositions which go by the name of Essays. As for the first, I have the whole scheme of the discourse in my mind before I set pen to paper. In the other kind of writing, it is sufficient that I have several thoughts on a subject, without troubling myself to range them in such order that they may seem to grow out of one another, and be disposed under their proper heads. Seneca and Montaigne are patterns for writing in this last kind, as Tully and Aristotle excel in the other. When I read an author of genius who writes without method, I fancy myself in a wood that abounds with a great many noble objects, rising among one another, in the greatest confusion and disorder. When I read a methodical discourse, I am in a regular plan-

tation, and can place myself in its several centres, so as to take a view of all the lines and walks that are struck from them. You may ramble in the one a whole day together, and every moment discover some thing or other that is new to you; but when you have done, you will have but a confused, imperfect notion of the place: in the other your eye commands the whole prospect, and gives you such an idea of it, as is not easily worn out of the memory.

Irregularity, and want of method, are only supportable in men of great learning or genius, who are often too full to be exact, and therefore choose to throw down their pearls in heaps before the reader, rather than be at the pains of stringing them.

Method is of advantage to the work, both in respect to the writer and the reader. In regard to the first, it is a great help to his invention. When a man has planned his discourse, he finds a great many thoughts rising out of every head, that do not offer themselves upon the general survey of a subject. His thoughts are at the same time more intelligible, and better discover their drift and meaning, when they are placed in their proper lights, and follow one another in a regular series, than when they are thrown together without order and connection. There is always an obscurity in confusion, and the same sentence that would have enlightened the reader in one part of the discourse, perplexes him in another. For the same reason likewise every thought in a methodical discourse shows itself in its greatest beauty, as the several figures

in a piece of painting receive new grace from their disposition in the picture. The advantages of a reader, from a methodical discourse, are correspondent with those of the writer. He comprehends every thing easily, takes it in with pleasure, and retains it long.

Method is not less requisite in ordinary conversation than in writing, provided a man would talk to make himself understood. I, who hear a thousand coffee-house debates every day, am very sensible of this want of method in the thoughts of my honest countrymen. There is not one dispute in ten which is managed in those schools of politics, where, after the three first sentences, the question is not entirely lost. Our disputants put me in mind of the cuttle-fish, that, when he is unable to extricate himself, blackens all the water about him till he becomes invisible. The man who does not know how to methodize his thoughts, has always, to borrow a phrase from the "Dispensary,"[1] *a barren superfluity of words:* the fruit is lost amidst the exuberance of leaves.

Tom Puzzle is one of the most eminent immethodical disputants of any that has fallen under my observation. Tom has read enough to make him very impertinent; his knowledge is sufficient to raise doubts, but not to clear them. It is pity that he has so much learning, or that he has not a great deal more. With these qualifications Tom sets up for a free-thinker, finds a great many things to blame in the constitution of his country, and gives shrewd intimations that he

[1] The Dispensary, a poem by Samuel Garth.

does not believe in another world. In short, Puzzle is an atheist as much as his parts will give him leave. He has got about half a dozen commonplace topics, into which he never fails to turn the conversation, whatever was the occasion of it: though the matter in debate be about Douay or Denain, it is ten to one but half his discourse runs upon the unreasonableness and bigotry of priestcraft. This makes Mr. Puzzle the admiration of all those who have less sense than himself, and the contempt of all those who have more. There is none in town whom Tom dreads so much as my friend Will Dry. Will, who is acquainted with Tom's logic, when he finds him running off the question, cuts him short with a "What then? We allow all this to be true, but what is it to our present purpose?" I have known Tom eloquent half an hour together, and triumphing, as he thought, in the superiority of the arguments, when he has been nonplussed on a sudden by Mr. Dry's desiring him to tell the company what it was that he endeavored to prove. In short, Dry is a man of a clear methodical head, but few words, and gains the same advantages over Puzzle, that a small body of regular troops would gain over a numberless and undisciplined militia. — *Spectator, No. 476.*

29. LIFELESS ORATORY.

Most foreign writers who have given any character of the English nation, whatever vices they ascribe to it, allow, in general, that the people are naturally modest. It proceeds, perhaps, from this our national

virtue, that our orators are observed to make use of less gesture or action than those of other countries. Our preachers stand stock still in the pulpit, and will not so much as move a finger to set off the best sermons in the world. We meet with the same speaking statues at our bars, and in all public places of debate. Our words flow from us in a smooth continued stream, without those strainings of the voice, motions of the body, and majesty of the hand, which are so much celebrated in the orators of Greece and Rome. We can talk of life and death in cold blood, and keep our temper in a discourse which turns upon every thing that is dear to us. Though our soul breaks out in the finest tropes and figures, it is not able to stir a limb about us. I have heard it observed more than once, by those who have seen Italy, that an untravelled Englishman cannot relish all the beauties of Italian pictures, because the postures which are expressed in them are often such as are peculiar to that country. One who has not seen an Italian in the pulpit will not know what to make of that noble gesture in Raphael's picture of St. Paul preaching at Athens, where the apostle is represented as lifting up both his arms, and pouring out the thunders of his rhetoric amidst an audience of pagan philosophers.

It is certain that proper gestures and vehement exertions of the voice cannot be too much studied by a public orator. They are a kind of comment to what he utters, and enforce every thing he says, with weak hearers, better than the strongest argument he can

make use of. They keep the audience awake, and fix their attention to what is delivered to them, at the same time that they show the speaker is in earnest, and affected himself with what he so passionately recommends to others. Violent gesture and vociferation naturally shake the hearts of the ignorant, and fill them with a kind of religious horror. Nothing is more frequent than to see women weep and tremble at the sight of a moving preacher, though he is placed quite out of their hearing; as in England we very frequently see people lulled asleep with solid and elaborate discourses of piety, who would be warmed and transported out of themselves by the bellowings and distortions of enthusiasm.

If nonsense, when accompanied with such an emotion of voice and body, has such an influence on men's minds, what might we not expect from many of those admirable discourses which are printed in our tongue, were they delivered with a becoming fervor, and with the agreeable graces of voice and gesture?

We are told that the great Latin orator very much impaired his health by this *laterum contentio*, — this vehemence of action with which he used to deliver himself. The Greek orator was likewise so famous for this particular in rhetoric, that one of his antagonists, whom he had banished from Athens, reading over the oration which had procured his banishment, and seeing his friends admire it, could not forbear asking them, if they were so much affected by the bare reading of it, how much more they would have

been alarmed, had they heard him actually throwing out such a storm of eloquence.

How cold and dead a figure, in comparison of these two great men, does an orator often make at the British bar, holding up his head with the most insipid serenity, and stroking the sides of a long wig that reaches down to his middle! The truth of it is, there is often nothing more ridiculous than the gestures of an English speaker; you see some of them running their hands into their pockets as far as ever they can thrust them, and others looking with great attention on a piece of paper that has nothing written in it; you may see many a smart rhetorician turning his hat in his hands, moulding it into several different cocks, examining sometimes the lining of it, and sometimes the button, during the whole course of his harangue. A deaf man would think he was cheapening a beaver, when perhaps he is talking of the fate of the British nation. I remember when I was a young man, and used to frequent Westminster Hall, there was a counsellor who never pleaded without a piece of packthread in his hand, which he used to twist about a thumb, or a finger, all the while he was speaking; the wags of those days used to call it the thread of his discourse, for he was not able to utter a word without it. One of his clients, who was more merry than wise, stole it from him one day in the midst of his pleading; but he had better have let it alone, for he lost his cause by his jest.

I have all along acknowledged myself to be a dumb

man, and therefore may be thought a very improper person to give rules for oratory; but I believe every one will agree with me in this, that we ought either to lay aside all kinds of gesture (which seems to be very suitable to the genius of our nation), or at least to make use of such only as are graceful and expressive. — *Spectator, No. 407.*

V.

MORALS AND RELIGION.

30. MEDITATIONS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

When I am in a serious humor, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole afternoon in the churchyard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person, but that he was born upon one day, and died upon another: the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances, that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence, whether of brass or marble, as a kind of satire upon the departed persons, who had left no other memorial of them, but that they were born and that they died. They put one in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but that they may be killed,

and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilochumque. — VIRG.

The life of these men is finely described in Holy Writ by "the path of an arrow," which is immediately closed up and lost.

Upon my going into the church, I entertained myself with the digging of a grave; and saw, in every shovel-full of it that was thrown up, the fragment of a bone or skull intermixed with a kind of fresh mouldering earth that some time or other had a place in the composition of a human body. Upon this I began to consider with myself, what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass; how beauty, strength, and youth, with old age, weakness, and deformity, lay undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter.

After having thus surveyed this great magazine of mortality, as it were in the lump, I examined it more particularly by the accounts which I found on several of the monuments which are raised in every quarter of that ancient fabric. Some of them were covered with such extravagant epitaphs, that, if it were possible for the dead person to be acquainted with them, he would blush at the praises which his

friends have bestowed upon him. There are others so excessively modest, that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek or Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelvemonth. In the poetical quarter, I found there were poets who had no monuments, and monuments which had no poets. I observed, indeed, that the present war had filled the church with many of these uninhabited monuments, which had been erected to the memory of persons whose bodies were perhaps buried in the plains of Blenheim, or in the bosom of the ocean.

I could not but be very much delighted with several modern epitaphs, which are written with great elegance of expression and justness of thought, and therefore do honor to the living as well as to the dead. As a foreigner is very apt to conceive an idea of the ignorance or politeness of a nation from the turn of their public monuments and inscriptions, they should be submitted to the perusal of men of learning and genius before they are put in execution. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's monument has very often given me great offence; instead of the brave, rough English admiral, which was the distinguishing character of that plain, gallant man, he is represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself upon velvet cushions under a canopy of state. The inscription is answerable to the monument; for instead of celebrating the many remarkable actions he had performed in the service of his country, it acquaints us only with the manner of his death,

in which it was impossible for him to reap any honor. The Dutch, whom we are apt to despise for want of genius, show an infinitely greater taste of antiquity and politeness in their buildings and works of this nature, than what we meet with in those of our own country. The monuments of their admirals, which have been erected at the public expense, represent them like themselves; and are adorned with rostral crowns and naval ornaments, with beautiful festoons of seaweed, shells, and coral.

But to return to our subject. I have left the repository of our English kings for the contemplation of another day, when I shall find my mind disposed for so serious an amusement. I know that entertainments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds and gloomy imaginations: but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means, I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow; when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I

consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together. — *Spectator, No. 26.*

31. THE VISION OF MIRZAH.

When I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several Oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled "The Visions of Mirzah," which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them, and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word, as follows: —

"On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always kept holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, 'Surely,' said I, 'man is but a shadow, and life a dream.' Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it

to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from any thing I had ever heard: they put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

"I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius, and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts, by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, 'Mirzah,' said he, 'I have heard thee in thy soliloquies: follow me.'

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, 'Cast thy eyes eastward,' said he, 'and tell me what thou seest.' — 'I see,' said I, 'a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.' — 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity.' — 'What is the reason,' said I, 'that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?' — 'What thou seest,' said he, 'is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now,' said he, 'this sea that is thus bounded with dark-

ness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.'—'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.'—'That bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life: consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it.'—'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through into the tide, and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at every thing that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled, and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them;

but often, when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed, and down they sank. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with cimeters in their hands, and others with [pills and powders], who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

"The genius, seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. 'Take thine eyes off the bridge,' said he, 'and tell me if thou yet seest any thing thou dost not comprehend.' Upon looking up, 'What mean,' said I, 'those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.' —'These,' said the genius, 'are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.'

'I here fetched a deep sigh. 'Alas,' said I, 'man was made in vain! How is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!' The genius, being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. 'Look no more,' said he, 'on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.' I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with a supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered

with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits, with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of the fountains, or resting on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me that there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. 'The islands,' said he, 'that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching farther than thine eye or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirzah, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I, 'Show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address him a second time, but I found that he had left me: I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long, hol-

low valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it."

The end of the first vision of Mirzah. — *Spectator, No. 159.*

32. THE GOLDEN SCALES.

WAS lately entertaining myself with comparing Homer's balance, in which Jupiter is represented as weighing the fates of Hector and Achilles, with a passage of Virgil, wherein that deity is introduced as weighing the fates of Turnus and Æneas. I then considered how the same way of thinking prevailed in the Eastern parts of the world, as in those noble passages of Scripture wherein we are told that the great king of Babylon, the day before his death, had been weighed in the balance and been found wanting. In other places of the holy writings, the Almighty is described as weighing the mountains in scales, making the weight for the winds, knowing the balancings of the clouds; and in others, as weighing the actions of men, and laying their calamities together in a balance. Milton, as I have observed in a former paper, had an eye to several of those foregoing instances, in that beautiful description wherein he represents the archangel and the evil spirit as addressing themselves for the combat, but parted by the balance which appeared in the heavens, and weighed the consequences of such a battle.

"The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astræa and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
The pendulous round earth, with balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend:—

"Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own, but given. What folly, then,
To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
Than Heaven permits; nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire. For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. — The fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night."[1]

These several amusing thoughts having taken possession of my mind some time before I went to sleep, and mingling themselves with my ordinary ideas, raised in my imagination a very odd kind of vision. I was, methought, replaced in my study, and seated in my elbow-chair, where I had indulged the foregoing speculations, with my lamp burning by me as usual. Whilst I was here meditating on several subjects of morality, and considering the nature of many virtues and vices, as materials for those discourses with which I daily entertain the public, I saw, methought, a pair of golden

[1] Paradise Lost, Book IV., *ad fin.*

scales hanging by a chain of the same metal over the table that stood before me; when on a sudden there were great heaps of weights thrown down on each side of them. I found, upon examining these weights, they showed the value of every thing that is in esteem among men. I made an essay of them by putting the weight of wisdom in one scale, and that of riches in another; upon which the latter, to show its comparative lightness, immediately *flew up, and kicked the beam.*

But, before I proceed, I must inform my reader, that these weights did not exert their natural gravity till they were laid in the golden balance, insomuch that I could not guess which was light or heavy whilst I held them in my hand. This I found by several instances; for upon my laying a weight in one of the scales, which was inscribed by the word Eternity, though I threw in that of time, prosperity, affliction, wealth, poverty, interest, success, with many other weights, which in my hand seemed very ponderous, they were not able to stir the opposite balance, nor could they have prevailed, though assisted with the weight of the sun, the stars, and the earth.

Upon emptying the scales, I laid several titles and honors, with pomps, triumphs, and many weights of the like nature, in one of them; and seeing a little glittering weight lie by me, I threw it accidentally into the other scale, when, to my great surprise, it proved so exact a counterpoise, that it kept the balance in an equilibrium. This little glittering weight was inscribed

upon the edges of it with the word Vanity. I found there were several other weights which were equally heavy, and exact counterpoises to one another; a few of them I tried, as avarice and poverty, riches and content, with some others.

There were likewise several weights that were of the same figure, and seemed to correspond with each other, but were entirely different when thrown into the scales; as, religion and hypocrisy, pedantry and learning, wit and vivacity, superstition and devotion, gravity and wisdom, with many others.

I observed one particular weight, lettered on both sides, and, upon applying myself to the reading of it, I found on one side written, "In the dialect of men," and underneath it, *CALAMITIES;* on the other side was written, "In the language of the gods," and underneath, *BLESSINGS.* I found the intrinsic value of this weight to be much greater than I imagined; for it overpowered health, wealth, good fortune, and many other weights, which were much more ponderous in my hand than the other.

There is a saying among the Scots, that "An ounce of mother wit is worth a pound of clergy." I was sensible of the truth of this saying, when I saw the difference between the weight of natural parts and that of learning. The observation which I made upon these two weights opened to me a new field of discoveries; for notwithstanding the weight of natural parts was much heavier than that of learning, I observed that it weighed an hundred times heavier than

it did before, when I put learning into the same scale with it. I made the same observation upon faith and morality; for notwithstanding the latter outweighed the former separately, it received a thousand times more additional weight from its conjunction with the former than what it had by itself. This odd phenomenon showed itself in other particulars, as in wit and judgment, philosophy and religion, justice and humanity, zeal and charity, depth of sense and perspicuity of style, with innumerable other particulars too long to be mentioned in this paper.

As a dream seldom fails of dashing seriousness with impertinence, mirth with gravity, methought I made several other experiments of a more ludicrous nature: by one of which I found that an English octavo was very often heavier than a French folio; and by another, that an old Greek or Latin author weighed down a whole library of moderns. Seeing one of my "Spectators" lying by me, I laid it into one of the scales, and flung a two-penny piece into the other: the reader will not inquire into the event, if he remembers the first trial which I have recorded in this paper. I afterwards threw both the sexes into the balance; but, as it is not for my interest to disoblige either of them, I shall desire to be excused from telling the result of this experiment. Having an opportunity of this nature in my hands, I could not forbear throwing into one scale the principles of a Tory, and into the other those of a Whig; but, as I have all along declared this to be a neutral paper, I shall likewise desire to be silent under

this head also, — though, upon examining one of the weights, I saw the word *TEKEL* engraven on it in capital letters.

I made many other experiments; and, though I have not room for them all in this day's speculation, I may perhaps reserve them for another. I shall only add, that upon my awaking I was sorry to find my golden scales vanished, but resolved for the future to learn this lesson from them: Not to despise or value any things for their appearances, but to regulate my esteem and passions towards them according to their real and intrinsic value. — *Spectator, No. 463.*

33. PURITANIC PIETY.

About an age ago it was the fashion in England, for every one that would be thought religious, to throw as much sanctity as possible into his face, and in particular to abstain from all appearances of mirth and pleasantry, which were looked upon as the marks of a carnal mind. The saint was of a sorrowful countenance, and generally eaten up with spleen and melancholy. A gentleman, who was lately a great ornament to the learned world, has diverted me more than once with an account of the reception which he met with from a very famous Independent minister, who was head of a college in those times. This gentleman was then a young adventurer in the republic of letters, and just fitted out for the university with a good cargo of Latin and Greek. His friends were resolved that he should try his fortune at an election which was drawing near

in the college, of which the Independent minister whom I have before mentioned was governor. The youth, according to custom, waited on him in order to be examined. He was received at the door by a servant, who was one of that gloomy generation that were then in fashion. He conducted him, with great silence and seriousness, to a long gallery which was darkened at noonday, and had only a single candle burning in it. After a short stay in this melancholy apartment, he was led into a chamber hung with black, where he entertained himself for some time by the glimmering of a taper, till at length the head of the college came out to him from an inner room, with half a dozen nightcaps upon his head, and religious horror in his countenance. The young man trembled; but his fears increased, when, instead of being asked what progress he had made in learning, he was examined how he abounded in grace. His Latin and Greek stood him in little stead: he was to give an account only of the state of his soul; whether he was of the number of the elect; what was the occasion of his conversion; upon what day of the month, and hour of the day, it happened; how it was carried on, and when completed. The whole examination was summed up with one short question; namely, *Whether he was prepared for death?* The boy, who had been bred up by honest parents, was frighted out of his wits at the solemnity of the proceeding, and by the last dreadful interrogatory; so that, upon making his escape out of the house of mourning, he could never be brought

a second time to the examination, as not being able to go through the terrors of it.

Notwithstanding this general form and outside of religion is pretty well worn out among us, there are many persons, who, by a natural uncheerfulness of heart, mistaken notions of piety, or weakness of understanding, love to indulge this uncomfortable way of life, and give up themselves a prey to grief and melancholy. Superstitious fears and groundless scruples cut them off from the pleasures of conversation, and all those social entertainments which are not only innocent, but laudable; as if mirth were made for reprobates, and cheerfulness of heart denied those who are the only persons that have a proper title to it.

Sombrius is one of these sons of sorrow. He thinks himself obliged in duty to be sad and disconsolate. He looks on a sudden fit of laughter as a breach of his baptismal vow. An innocent jest startles him like blasphemy. Tell him of one who is advanced to a title of honor, he lifts up his hands and eyes; describe a public ceremony, he shakes his head; show him a gay equipage, he blesses himself. All the little ornaments of life are pomps and vanities. Mirth is wanton, and wit profane. He is scandalized at youth for being lively, and at childhood for being playful. He sits at a christening, or a marriage-feast, as at a funeral; sighs at the conclusion of a merry story, and grows devout when the rest of the company grow pleasant. After all, Sombrius is a religious man, and would have behaved himself very properly, had he

lived when Christianity was under a general persecution.

I would by no means presume to tax such characters with hypocrisy, as is done too frequently; that being a vice which I think none but he who knows the secrets of men's hearts should pretend to discover in another, where the proofs of it do not amount to a demonstration. On the contrary, as there are many excellent persons who are weighed down by this habitual sorrow of heart, they rather deserve our compassion than our reproaches. I think, however, they would do well to consider whether such a behavior does not deter men from a religious life, by representing it as an unsociable state, that extinguishes all joy and gladness, darkens the face of nature, and destroys the relish of being itself.

I have, in former papers, shown how great a tendency there is to cheerfulness in religion, and how such a frame of mind is not only the most lovely, but the most commendable in a virtuous person. In short, those who represent religion in so unamiable a light are like the spies sent by Moses to make a discovery of the land of promise, when by their reports they discouraged the people from entering upon it. Those who show us the joy, the cheerfulness, the good-humor, that naturally spring up in this happy state, are like the spies bringing along with them the clusters of grapes and delicious fruits, that might invite their companions into the pleasant country which produced them.

An eminent Pagan writer[1] has made a discourse to show that the atheist, who denies a God, does him less dishonor than the man who owns his being, but at the same time believes him to be cruel, hard to please, and terrible to human nature. For my own part, says he, I would rather it should be said of me, that there was never any such man as Plutarch, than that Plutarch was ill-natured, capricious, or inhumane.

If we may believe our logicians, man is distinguished from all other creatures by the faculty of laughter. He has a heart capable of mirth, and naturally disposed to it. It is not the business of virtue to extirpate the affections of the mind, but to regulate them. It may moderate and restrain, but was not designed to banish gladness from the heart of man. Religion contracts the circle of our pleasures, but leaves it wide enough for her votaries to expatiate in. The contemplation of the Divine Being, and the exercise of virtue, are in their own nature so far from excluding all gladness of heart, that they are perpetual sources of it. In a word, the true spirit of religion cheers as well as composes the soul; it banishes indeed all levity of behavior, all vicious and dissolute mirth, but in exchange fills the mind with a perpetual serenity, uninterrupted cheerfulness, and an habitual inclination to please others, as well as to be pleased in itself.—*Spectator, No. 494.*

[1] Plutarch, *De Superstitione.*

34. SATURDAY SERMON ON CHEERFULNESS AND MIRTH.

I HAVE always preferred cheerfulness to mirth. The latter I consider as an act, the former as a habit of the mind. Mirth is short and transient, cheerfulness fixed and permanent. Those are often raised into the greatest transports of mirth, who are subject to the greatest depressions of melancholy: on the contrary, cheerfulness, though it does not give the mind such an exquisite gladness, prevents us from falling into any depths of sorrow. Mirth is like a flash of lightning, that breaks through a gloom of clouds, and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps up a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity.

Men of austere principles look upon mirth as too wanton and dissolute for a state of probation, and as filled with a certain triumph and insolence of heart, that is inconsistent with a life which is every moment obnoxious to the greatest dangers. Writers of this complexion have observed, that the sacred Person who was the great pattern of perfection was never seen to laugh.

Cheerfulness of mind is not liable to any of these exceptions: it is of a serious and composed nature; it does not throw the mind into a condition improper for the present state of humanity, and is very conspicuous in the characters of those who are looked upon as the greatest philosophers among the heathens, as well as among those who have been deservedly esteemed as saints and holy men among Christians.

If we consider cheerfulness in three lights, with regard to ourselves, to those we converse with, and to the great Author of our being, it will not a little recommend itself on each of these accounts. The man who is possessed of this excellent frame of mind is not only easy in his thoughts, but a perfect master of all the powers and faculties of his soul; his imagination is always clear, and his judgment undisturbed; his temper is even and unruffled, whether in action or in solitude. He comes with a relish to all those goods which nature has provided for him, tastes all the pleasures of the creation which are poured about him, and does not feel the full weight of those accidental evils which may befall him.

If we consider him in relation to the persons whom he converses with, it naturally produces love and goodwill towards him. A cheerful mind is not only disposed to be affable and obliging, but raises the same good humor in those who come within its influence. A man finds himself pleased, he does not know why, with the cheerfulness of his companion: it is like a sudden sunshine that awakens a secret delight in the mind, without her attending to it: the heart rejoices of its own accord, and naturally flows out into friendship and benevolence towards the person who has so kindly an effect upon it.

When I consider this cheerful state of mind in its third relation, I cannot but look upon it as a constant habitual gratitude to the great Author of nature. An inward cheerfulness is an implicit praise and thanks-

giving to Providence under all its dispensations: it is a kind of acquiescence in the state wherein we are placed, and a secret approbation of the Divine will in his conduct towards men.

There are but two things, which, in my opinion, can reasonably deprive us of this cheerfulness of heart. The first of these is the sense of guilt. A man who lives in a state of vice and impenitence can have no title to that evenness and tranquillity of mind which is the health of the soul, and the natural effect of virtue and innocence. Cheerfulness in an ill man deserves a harder name than language can furnish us with, and is many degrees beyond what we commonly call folly or madness.

Atheism, by which I mean a disbelief of a Supreme Being, and consequently of a future state, under whatsoever titles it shelters itself, may likewise very reasonably deprive a man of this cheerfulness of temper. There is something so particularly gloomy and offensive to human nature in the prospect of non-existence, that I cannot but wonder, with many excellent writers, how it is possible for a man to outlive the expectation of it. For my own part, I think the being of a God is so little to be doubted, that it is almost the only truth we are sure of, and such a truth as we meet with in every object, in every occurrence, and in every thought. If we look into the characters of this tribe of infidels, we generally find they are made up of pride, spleen, and cavil. It is indeed no wonder that men who are uneasy to themselves should be so to the

rest of the world; and how is it possible for a man to be otherwise than uneasy in himself, who is in danger every moment of losing his entire existence, and dropping into nothing?

The vicious man and atheist have therefore no pretence to cheerfulness, and would act very unreasonably should they endeavor after it. It is impossible for any one to live in good-humor, and enjoy his present existence, who is apprehensive either of torment or of annihilation, — of being miserable, or of not being at all.

After having mentioned these two great principles, which are destructive of cheerfulness in their own nature, as well as in right reason, I cannot think of any other that ought to banish this happy temper from a virtuous mind. Pain and sickness, shame and reproach, poverty and old age, nay, death itself, considering the shortness of their duration, and the advantage we may reap from them, do not deserve the name of evils: a good mind may bear up under them with fortitude, with indolence, and with cheerfulness of heart. The tossing of a tempest does not discompose him, which he is sure will bring him to a joyful harbor.

A man who uses his best endeavors to live according to the dictates of virtue and right reason has two perpetual sources of cheerfulness, in the consideration of his own nature, and of that Being on whom he has a dependence. If he looks into himself, he cannot but rejoice in that existence which is so lately

bestowed upon him, and which, after millions of ages, will be still new, and still in its beginning. How many self-congratulations naturally arise in the mind, when it reflects on this its entrance into eternity, when it takes a view of those improvable faculties, which in a few years, and even at his first setting out, have made so considerable a progress, and which will be still receiving an increase of perfection, and consequently an increase of happiness? The consciousness of such a being spreads a perpetual diffusion of joy through the soul of a virtuous man, and makes him look upon himself every moment as more happy than he knows how to conceive.

The second source of cheerfulness, to a good mind, is its consideration of that Being on whom we have our dependence, and in whom, though we behold him as yet but in the first faint discoveries of his perfections, we see every thing that we can imagine as great, glorious, or amiable. We find ourselves everywhere upheld by his goodness, and surrounded with an immensity of love and mercy. In short, we depend upon a Being whose power qualifies him to make us happy by an infinity of means, whose goodness and truth engage him to make those happy who desire it of him, and whose unchangeableness will secure us in this happiness to all eternity.

Such considerations, which every one should perpetually cherish in his thoughts, will banish from us all that secret heaviness of heart which unthinking men are subject to when they lie under no real afflic-

tion, all that anguish which we may feel from any evil that actually oppresses us, to which I may likewise add those little cracklings of mirth and folly that are apter to betray virtue than support it; and establish in us such an even and cheerful temper, as makes us pleasing to ourselves, to those with whom we converse, and to Him whom we were made to please. — *Spectator, No. 381.*

35. SATURDAY SERMON ON RECKONING OUR NEIGHBORS' MISFORTUNES AS JUDGMENTS.

We cannot be guilty of a greater act of uncharitableness, than to interpret the afflictions which befall our neighbors, as *punishments* and *judgments*. It aggravates the evil to him who suffers, when he looks upon himself as the mark of Divine vengeance, and abates the compassion of those towards him, who regard him in so dreadful a light. The humor of turning every misfortune into a judgment proceeds from wrong notions of religion, which, in its own nature, produces good-will towards men, and puts the mildest construction upon every accident that befalls them. In this case, therefore, it is not religion that sours a man's temper, but it is his temper that sours his religion: people of gloomy, uncheerful imaginations, or of envious, malignant tempers, whatever kind of life they are engaged in, will discover their natural tincture of mind in all their thoughts, words, and actions. As the finest wines have often the taste of the soil, so even the most religious thoughts often draw something that is par-

ticular from the constitution of the mind in which they arise. When folly or superstition strikes in with this natural depravity of temper, it is not in the power even of religion itself, to preserve the character of the person who is possessed with it from appearing highly absurd and ridiculous.

An old maiden gentlewoman, whom I shall conceal under the name of Nemesis, is the greatest discoverer of judgments that I have met with. She can tell you what sin it was that set such a man's house on fire, or blew down his barns. Talk to her of an unfortunate young lady that hath lost her beauty by the small-pox: she fetches a deep sigh, and tells you that when she had a fine face she was always looking on it in her glass. Tell her of a piece of good fortune that has befallen one of her acquaintance; and she wishes it may prosper with her, but her mother used one of her nieces very barbarously. Her usual remarks turn upon people who had great estates, but never enjoyed them, by reason of some flaw in their own or their fathers' behavior. She can give you the reason why such a one died childless; why such a one was cut off in the flower of his youth; why such a one was unhappy in her marriage; why one broke his leg in such a particular spot of ground; and why another was killed with a back-sword, rather than with any other kind of weapon. She has a crime for every misfortune that can befall any of her acquaintance; and when she hears of a robbery that has been made, or a murder that has been committed, enlarges more on the guilt of the suf-

fering person than on that of the thief or assassin. In short, she is so good a Christian, that whatever happens to herself is a trial, and whatever happens to her neighbors is a judgment.

The very description of this folly, in ordinary life, is sufficient to expose it; but when it appears in a pomp and dignity of style, it is very apt to amuse and terrify the mind of the reader. Herodotus and Plutarch very often apply their judgments as impertinently as the old woman I have before mentioned, though their manner of relating them makes the folly itself appear venerable. Indeed, most historians, as well Christian as Pagan, have fallen into this idle superstition, and spoken of ill success, unforeseen disasters, and terrible events, as if they had been let into the secrets of Providence, and made acquainted with that private conduct by which the world is governed. One would think several of our own historians in particular had many revelations of this kind made to them. Our old English monks seldom let any of their kings depart in peace who had endeavored to diminish the power or wealth of which the ecclesiastics were in those times possessed. William the Conqueror's race generally found their judgments in the New Forest, where their fathers had pulled down churches and monasteries. In short, read one of the chronicles written by an author of this frame of mind, and you would think you were reading an history of the kings of Israel and Judah, where the historians were actually inspired, and where, by a particular scheme of Providence, the kings were distin-

guished by judgments or blessings, according as they promoted idolatry or the worship of the true God.

I cannot but look upon this manner of judging upon misfortunes not only to be very uncharitable in regard to the persons whom they befall, but very presumptuous in regard to him who is supposed to inflict them. It is a strong argument for a state of retribution hereafter, that in this world virtuous persons are very often unfortunate, and vicious persons prosperous; which is wholly repugnant to the nature of a Being who appears infinitely wise and good in all his works, unless we may suppose that such a promiscuous and undistinguished distribution of good and evil, which was necessary for carrying on the designs of Providence in this life, will be rectified and made amends for in another. We are not therefore to expect that fire should fall from heaven in the ordinary course of Providence; nor, when we see triumphant guilt or depressed virtue in particular persons, that Omnipotence will make bare its holy arm in defence of the one or punishment of the other. It is sufficient that there is a day set apart for the hearing and requiting of both according to their respective merits.[1] — *Spectator, No. 483.*

36. SATURDAY SERMON ON AIDS TO FAITH.

(Concluding paragraph.)

THE Supreme Being has made the best arguments for his own existence in the formation of the heavens and earth; and these are arguments which a man of

[1] This paper is abridged here by the omission of two paragraphs.

sense cannot forbear attending to, who is out of the noise and hurry of human affairs. Aristotle says, that should a man live under ground, and there converse with works of art and mechanism, and should afterwards be brought up into the open day, and see the several glories of the heaven and earth, he would immediately pronounce them the works of such a being as we define God to be. The Psalmist has very beautiful strokes of poetry to this purpose in that exalted strain, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth his handywork. One day telleth another: and one night certifieth another. There is neither speech nor language: but their voices are heard among them. Their sound is gone out into all the lands: and their words unto the ends of the world." As such a bold and sublime manner of thinking furnished very noble matter for an ode, the reader may see it wrought into the following one.

I.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great original proclaim:
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty hand.

II.

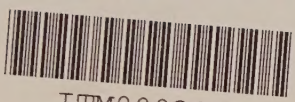
Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,

And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

III.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing, as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."

Spectator, No. 465.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